

1997 NEBRASKA FOOTBALL PREVIEW

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Huskers Illustrated

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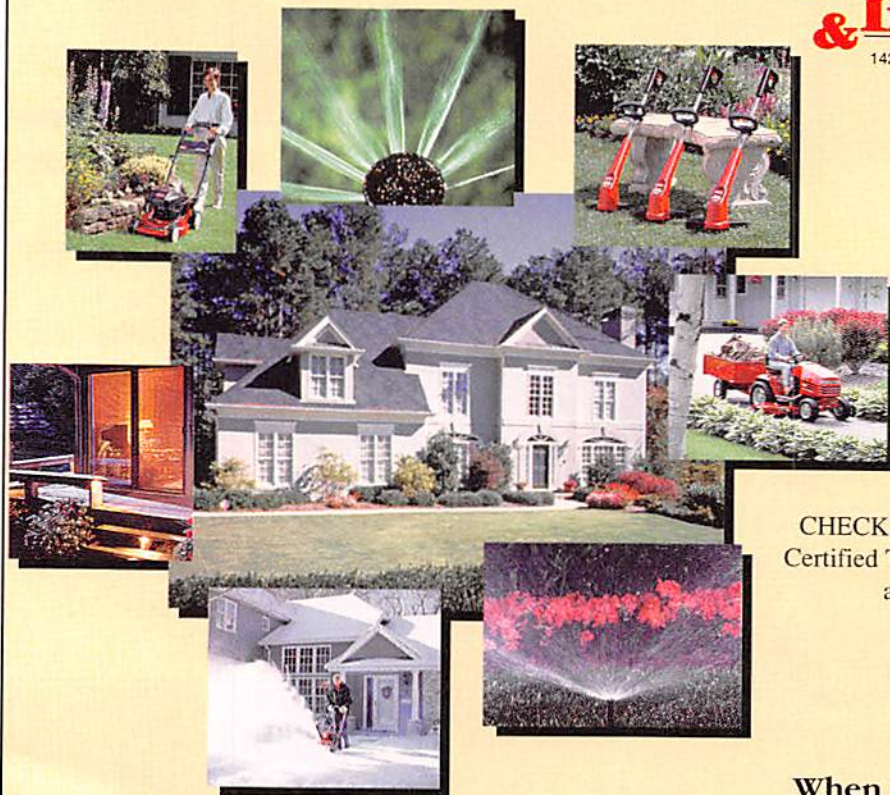
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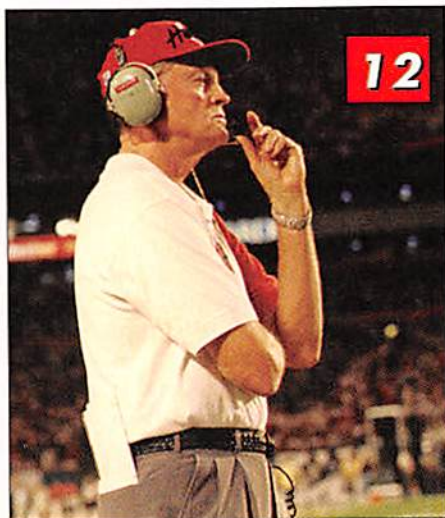
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By Mike Babcock

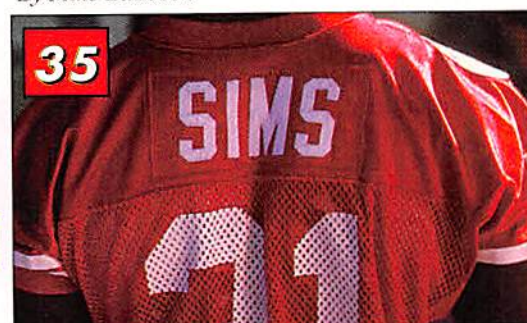
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Jason Peter and Grant Wistrom (Jon Waller)

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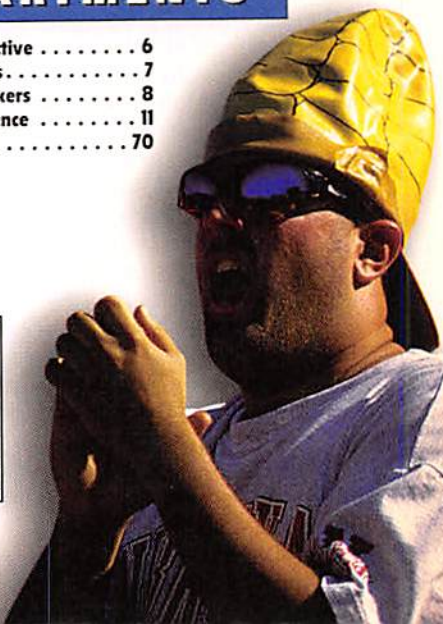
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All The Pieces Are In Place

There may have been heavy losses on paper, but this year's squad still has the potential to win a national title

I remember saying last season that if Nebraska could "3-PEAT," the Cornhuskers would go "FOUR (for) SURE" and be the first major college team ever to put a string of four national championships together. That scenario didn't pan out, even though a lot of the players, I'm sure, believe in their hearts that they could have beaten either Florida or Florida State in the Sugar Bowl.

A lot of the players, I'm sure, also believe that either team's quarterback — Danny Wuerffel or Thad Busby — would have been easier to sack than the elusive Texan, James Brown.

Last season, we had the best defensive line I've seen since Rich Glover, Larry Jacobson, Willie Harper and John (the "Spider") Adkins were ruling opposing offensive lines in 1971.

But this season, it could be even better. With the leadership of Jason Peter and "the Nasty Guys," we could have one of the toughest, nastiest defensive lines we've ever seen at Nebraska.

We lost eight of our starting 11 on defense, but I'd bet by the middle of next season, you won't even remember who's gone. Peter, Grant Wistrom, Eric Warfield, Octavious McFarlin and Ralph Brown, just to name a few, are ready to step up and pump up the volume to the tune of a national championship.

Offensively, we have most of our starting unit returning. We have only two offensive linemen to replace, and that's much more encouraging than having to replace two running backs or a quarterback. Ahman Green looks like the Ahman of old, with his slashing runs at 4.4 speed. He's quite impressive. And you've got to like DeAngelo Evans, with his scatback moves and power to back them up.

Jay Sims could be a pleasant surprise, if he could get more chances to play.

And now with the addition of Dan Alexander — when he comes back from knee surgery — Sims might not see much time at all after the Akron and Central Florida "pre-season" games.



**By
JOHNNY
RODGERS**

Joel Makovicka might get fewer snaps, too, once Alexander is healthy and running the way he did in the spring. Or, if Alexander is playing I-back, Willie Miller could be a surprise at fullback.

Frankie London and Monte Christo might motivate Scott Frost a bit, but I don't believe either guy can match Frost's season of experience at the helm of the Huskers. Some people were all over Frost last season, and yet the guy led the team to 11 victories in 13 games. Talk about pressure.

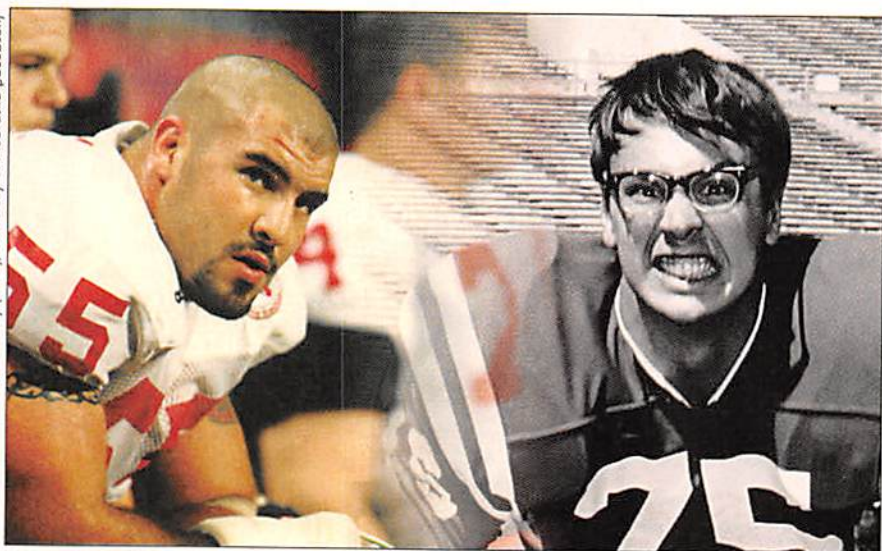
I really like wingback Shevin

season, they will need a scoring machine on offense, a defense that is tougher than nails and special teams that can score on an opponent from anywhere on the field. Place-kicker Kris Brown is a dangerous weapon anywhere inside the 40-yard line.

But Wiggins can hurt you from either end of the field.

Special teams play is overlooked by most. But it's something that takes more than part-time concentration. When I played, Bob Devaney put Cletus Fischer in charge of the special teams all the time. Some people might think we had good special teams because of me. That's only partly true.

We had a tenacious defense that wanted and was willing to do anything to win. I was a pretty good punt returner, but that was mainly because of the confidence I got from knowing that the defensive players who were responsible for protecting



Led by Jason Peter, this could be the best defensive line Nebraska has seen since Larry Jacobson's squad wreaked havoc in the early '70s.

Wiggins. He brings a dimension to the team that it didn't have last season. He's an offensive player, who can score on special teams as well, as a punt returner.

If the Cornhuskers are going to win the national championship this

me and blocking for me were really in control. They knew I wanted to score every single time I touched the ball, so they all made sure they blocked every time I ran.

Offenses win football games. Defenses win championships. And special teams lock up the victories. This year, we've got what it takes in those areas to take what the rest of the country throws at us. ■

It's No Pipeline, But It Will Do

Winning starts up front and Nebraska, though missing many pieces this spring, appears to be solid once again on the offensive line

As I made my way to Memorial Stadium for the Red-White spring game, I noticed how this cool, gray Saturday in April was almost the same as a cool, gray Saturday in September.

Husker fans were decked out in their various stages of red and white, roaming the campus and downtown areas with the same sense of energy they have on regular game days.

As I watched the crowd filter into the stadium, I began to realize that we would again witness a huge attendance for this game. We found out later that some 42,000-plus fans had packed into the north, south and west sections of the stadium for the afternoon. A year ago, following one of the greatest seasons ever in Nebraska football history, a 12-0 national championship year, 48,600-plus fans came out to watch the two-time national champion Huskers put the cap on the spring football season.

Husker football is very much alive and well. We are very fortunate, indeed.

This year's spring game matched the No. 1 offense against the No. 1 defense and so on, down the depth chart. It was an excellent test for the offense to go up against the Black Shirts. For most of the spring, the defense pretty much had its way with the offense. Most of that was due to the great number of injuries sustained by the offense. The offensive line was the most severely affected.

Coach Tom Osborne indicated on more than one occasion that when just one piece of the puzzle in the offensive line goes down, you can be in serious trouble. Yet the offensive line had a couple of starters missing for the Red-White game, and still it was able to do pretty well.

The five guys up front had solid

chemistry between them, and that's hard to achieve when two of the five parts are missing. The best example of chemistry would be that of the 1995 offensive line: Aaron Graham, Aaron Taylor, Chris Dishman, Eric Anderson and Steve Ott. It is a line with such chemistry that the entire line was received the College



**By
ADRIAN
FIALA**

Football Lineman of the Year award, presented by the Downtown Athletic Club of Washington, D.C.

For the most part, all of Nebraska's offensive linemen pos-



Injuries to Eric Anderson (70) and other starters allowed the Huskers to give playing time to backups this spring.

sess all of the qualities they need to play on the Husker line . . . balance and mobility, concentration, reaction, intelligence and control. All of these come into play up front, where you have to make split-second decisions to make a play work, to hold a block, not jump or move and handle the blitz or other defensive stunts.

The line play in the Red-White game caught my eye, especially that of guards Aaron Taylor and Jon Zatechka. Both of these players did very well . . . Taylor, in particular, on run blocking and Zatechka on pass blocking. Matt Hoskinson also

played well at center, and Fred Pollack did well against rush ends Chad Kelsay and Mike Rucker. That's tough duty, and Fred held up very well.

Third-team right tackle Jason Schwab also made some excellent blocks and had limited mistakes, as was the case with left guard James Sherman. This points up, in fact, that while we are surely concerned and disappointed by the number of injuries in the offensive line, the positive side of the matter is that the back-up players and lower-unit players got a lot more in the way of playing time, a lot more repetitions, and are, therefore, were able to show the coaches what they could do. The lower-unit players' objectives for spring practice are fulfilled, and the coaches may find their search for depth has been aided, ironically, by injuries. The best being that the injured player heals and recovers fully, comes back ready to go in the fall. Then the coaches will have a full complement of players for the position. Depth is found.

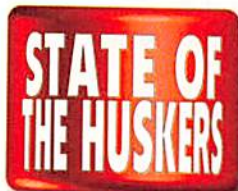
The other area that generated concern for most Husker fans and coaches was that of the secondary. Eight starters were lost on defense from last year, a defense which was as tough and nasty, and as skilled, as any I've seen.

But this "biggest concern" going into the spring campaign appears to have turned out better than everyone thought and is now an area of encouragement. The speed is definitely there, as it was last fall. A lot of good communication was going on during the game, and there was hard, strong, physical play.

There were other performances in the Red-White game that impressed me, among them: the play of special teams, Ahman Green's return to form and the tandem of redshirted freshmen Dan Alexander and Willie Miller.

But the play of the offensive line and the secondary was particularly pleasing.

There is definitely reason for optimism in 1997. ■



Who's Ducking Whom?

Finding teams willing to come to Lincoln to play in the Pigskin Classic wasn't any easier than trying to schedule non-conference opponents

"We told them the people we'd play. Some of them were teams that had a lot of success last year, but they lost some players like we did. So that was essentially what our interest was, simply playing somebody with relatively the same type of team in terms of experience . . . Clemson wasn't one of them." (Tom Osborne, April 5, 1997)



**By
MIKE
BABCOCK**

You've probably heard one version or another of this story. It's old, and certainly not news. It's also still something of a sore subject at Nebraska, depending on the version you've heard.

The Cornhuskers would have been opening the 1997 season in the Pigskin Classic on Aug. 23 if an opponent willing to play them in Memorial Stadium could have been found. The first choice was Georgia Tech. But Georgia Tech decided the only place it would play Nebraska was in Atlanta.

Although officials from ABC-TV and the National Association of Collegiate Athletic Directors (the game's sponsor) kept trying to find a suitable and acceptable opponent, Georgia Tech's unwillingness to visit Lincoln effectively ended Nebraska's chances of being a Pigskin Classic participant.

But the negotiations dragged on for a couple of weeks.

Cornhusker Athletic Director Bill Byrne suggested a rematch with Arizona State, an idea the Sun Devils immediately dismissed, not only because quarterback Jake Plummer has departed but also because of the memory of their last trip to Memorial Stadium and the 77-28 defeat that occurred there.

Iowa was among the other possibilities discussed. That would have been a natural, but the Hawkeyes had to decline, according to newspaper reports, because campus dorms

didn't open in time.

Maryland was yet another possibility. But the Terrapins decided to pass on a reported guarantee of \$650,000 because, according to reports in Baltimore, Nebraska wouldn't agree to make a trip East to play Maryland in return. The Terrapins wanted what amounted to a home-and-home agreement, even though Nebraska wouldn't have realized all the benefits of a home game in the Pigskin Classic.

There were other possible Pigskin Classic opponents mentioned for Nebraska, among them Michigan State, Southern California, California, Miami (Fla.) and, of course, Clemson.

Which brings us back to Osborne's comment the first week of spring practice.

As it turns out, Clemson never

Michael Chow



Nebraska didn't want to play a team with a "pat hand" so early and face another disaster like what occurred last year in Tempe, Ariz.

agreed to play in Lincoln. But the belief among Cornhusker fans was that it had and that Nebraska wasn't interested because Clemson had too many starters returning. Byrne was even quoted to that effect. But apparently negotiations never got to

such a point.

The number of returning starters was an issue, according to Osborne. "One of the criteria we looked at was, simply, did somebody have a pat hand or not. We played Arizona State last year with 19 returning starters, and until you get your team stabilized and settled down, it isn't real smart to go out and play somebody with practically everybody at key positions coming back," he said.

"I thought it was really kind of a gamble to play anybody."

There is no margin for error for programs with designs on winning the national championship. One loss, even in an opening game, can prove fatal. The highest a losing team in the Pigskin Classic has been ranked in the final Associated Press poll was ninth. Stanford climbed back to No. 9 after losing against Texas A&M 10-7 in 1992. The Aggies were seventh in the final AP poll that season.

(Colorado and Tennessee tied in

the first Pigskin Classic in 1990, when the Buffaloes won the AP version of the national championship and Tennessee finished at No. 8.)

The Kickoff Classic provides an even more dramatic indication of what happens to teams that lose such opening games. In 14 seasons, only one losing team in the Kickoff Classic has managed to finish in the AP's final Top 10. Ohio State, a 16-10 loser to Alabama in the 1986 game, climbed to No. 7.

Ironically, Alabama finished two places behind the Buckeyes.

There were positives besides the money, which could have been as much as \$200,000 more than the guarantee. Nebraska's home schedule could have used such a boost, what with non-conference games against Akron and Central Florida. But beyond that, the Cornhuskers could have used a better test than either Akron or Central Florida will provide before their game at Washington on Sept. 20.

(The problem in finding someone to come to Lincoln to play in the Pigskin Classic has illustrated why Nebraska had to settle for Akron and Central Florida on its non-conference schedule.)

The Huskies are favorites in the Pac-10, and they're already pointing to Nebraska's visit. The Cornhuskers recovered from their loss at Arizona State and worked their way back in the national rankings before faltering in the Big 12 championship game last season.

Obviously, a lot will be riding on the third game of the season in Seattle.

Even so, the negatives of playing in the Pigskin Classic may have outnumbered the positives. An already lengthy season would have been extended another week, with freshmen reporting on July 31. If the Cornhuskers had played in the Pigskin Classic and then advanced to the Big 12 playoff, that would have been 13 games not counting a bowl. Southeastern Conference teams don't participate in preseason games for that reason. Also, four "key players" will be enrolled in summer school classes that last until mid-August, according to Osborne, which would have limited their availability during two-a-days.

The most significant argument against participating in the Pigskin Classic, however, was that the players apparently were far from unanimous in wanting to add another game.

Besides, Clemson might not have come to Memorial Stadium. Clemson Athletic Director Bobby Robinson was quoted as saying he hadn't agreed to anything. "They may well have had some minimal interest," Osborne said of the Tigers. "It may have been a deal about like Georgia Tech, where all of a sudden you put it to them and say, 'Come on to Lincoln and play.'

"And then they say: 'We don't want to play.'"



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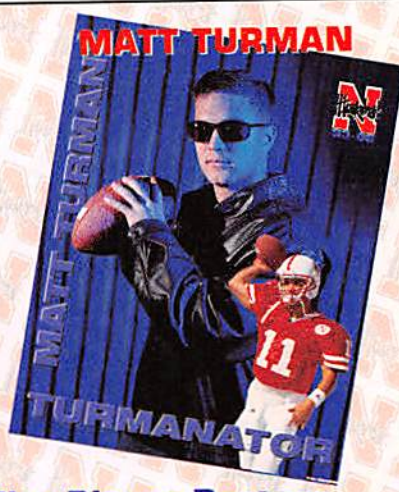


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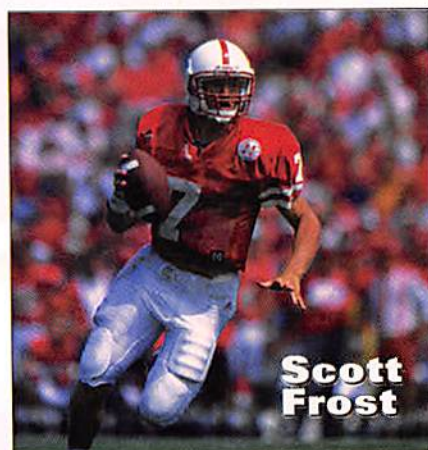
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HUSKERS AT A GLANCE



Scott Frost

Jon Waller



NU'S KEYS TO SUCCESS

BLACK ATTACK

One of the most offensive defenses in Nebraska history, last season's unit won many of the games when the offense sputtered. Returning only three starters from that squad is a concern. But Nebraska thinks its backups are starters anywhere else in the conference. A lot of guys will have to grow up in a hurry this year.

RUSHING TO HEALTH

Keeping the I-backs healthy is priority No. 1. The Husker offensive punch suffered last year as both Ahman Green and DeAngelo Evans battled injuries. Nebraska finished fourth nationally in rushing yardage — something that hadn't happened since 1977.

LINE BREAKS

Settling on an offensive line is critical. Nebraska juggled players prior to the Arizona State game and the wheels fell off Nebraska's national title wagon. Injuries in the spring didn't allow the first-team much time together.

1996 RESULTS

11-2

CONFERENCE FINISH: 8-1 (1st North)

S 7	Michigan State	W, 55-14
S 21	@ Arizona State	L, 0-19
S 28	Colorado State	W, 65-9
O 5	@ Kansas State	W, 39-3
O 12	Baylor	W, 49-0
O 19	@ Texas Tech	W, 24-10
O 26	Kansas	W, 63-7
N 2	@ Oklahoma	W, 73-21
N 9	Missouri	W, 51-7
N 16	@ Iowa State	W, 49-14
N 29	Colorado	W, 17-12
D 7	vs. Texas*	L, 27-37
D. 31	vs. Virginia Tech	W, 41-21

* Big 12 Championship Game • St. Louis, Mo.
\$ FedEx Orange Bowl • Miami, Fla.

TOP RETURNERS

RUSHING	Gms.	Att.	Yds.	YPC	YPG	TD
Green, A.	10	155	917	5.9	91.7	7
Evans, D.	11	148	776	5.2	70.5	14
Frost, S.	12	126	438	3.5	36.5	9
Sims, J.	11	41	288	7.0	32.0	3

PASSING	Gms.	Att.	Yds.	YPC	YPG	TD
Frost, S.	12	200-104-3	1440	120.0	13	
Perino, J.	7	2-0-0	0	0.0	0	

RECEIVING	Gms.	Rec.	Yds.	YPC	YPG	TD
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Evans, D.	11	12	75	6.3	6.8	0
Cheatham, K.	12	7	105	15.0	8.8	1
Brown, L.	11	5	101	20.2	9.2	1
Lake, J.	12	4	101	25.3	8.4	1

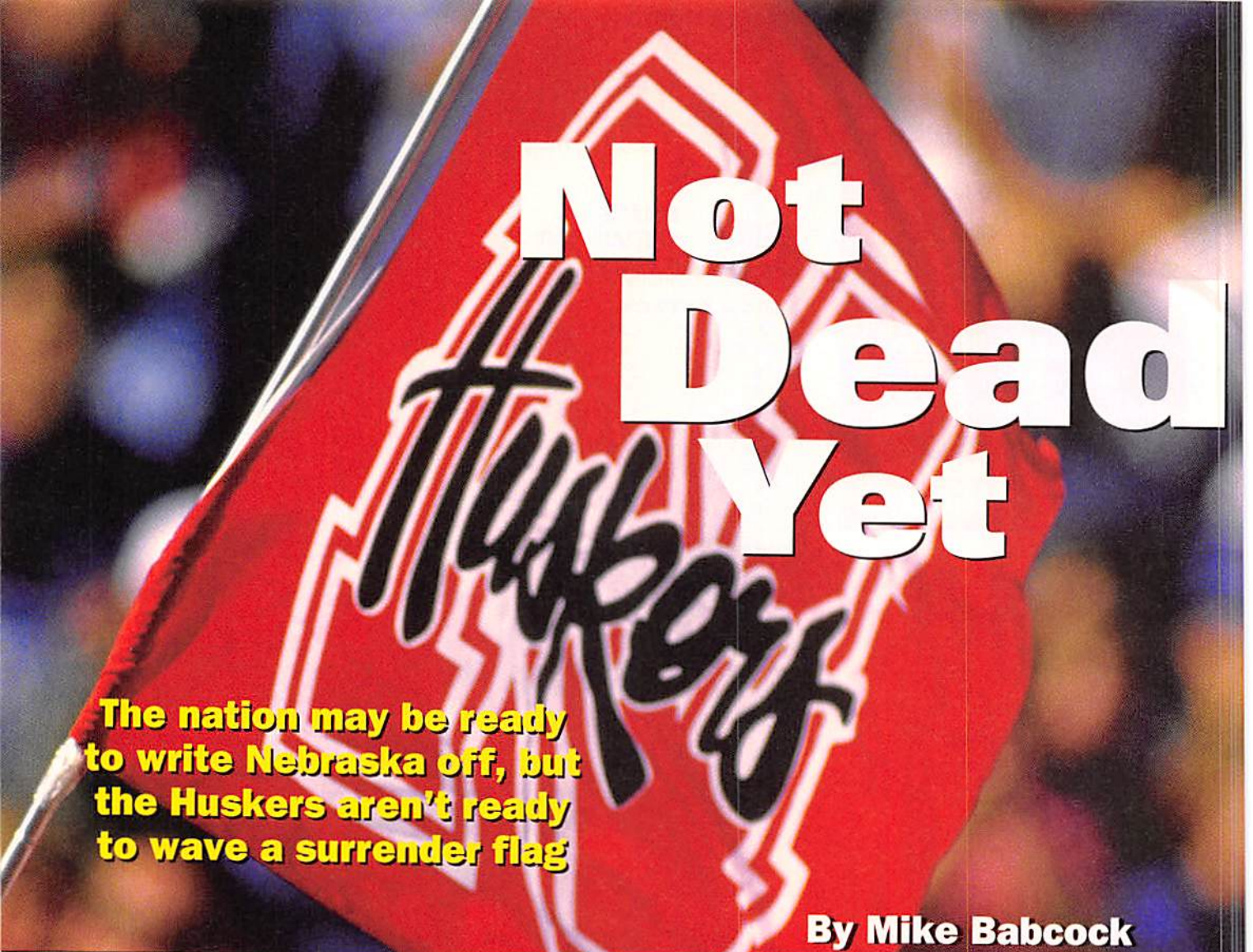
1997 SCHEDULE

Aug. 30	Akron
Sept. 13	Central Florida
Sept. 20	@ Washington
Oct. 4	Kansas State
Oct. 11	@ Baylor
Oct. 18	Texas Tech
Oct. 25	@ Kansas
Nov. 1	Oklahoma
Nov. 8	@ Missouri
Nov. 15	Iowa State
Nov. 28	@ Colorado

NEBRASKA TENTATIVE DEPTH CHART (FOLLOWING SPRING DRILLS)

SE	89	Jeff Lake	6-4	210	Sr.	LR	57	Chad Kelsay	6-3	235	Jr.
-or-	6	Kenny Cheatham	6-4	210	Jr.		84	Mike Rucker	6-6	250	Jr.
LT	73	Fred Pollack	6-4	310	Sr.	DT	96	Steve Warren	6-3	275	So.
	69	Adam Julch	6-5	310	So.		99	Jason Wiltz	6-3	285	Jr.
LG	67	Aaron Taylor	6-1	305	Sr.	DT	55	Jason Peter	6-5	285	Sr.
	63	James Sherman	6-2	300	So.		95	Derek Allen	6-3	280	So.
C	59	Josh Heskey	6-3	280	Jr.	RR	98	Grant Wistrom	6-5	250	Sr.
	62	Matt Hoskinson	6-1	280	Sr.		92	Travis Toline	6-3	235	Jr.
RG	64	Jon Zatechka	6-2	290	Sr.	SAM	46	Brian Shaw	6-0	215	So.
	71	Mike Van Cleave	6-2	295	Sr.		37	Tony Ortiz	6-0	210	So.
RT	70	Eric Anderson	6-4	305	Sr.	MIKE	44	Jay Foreman	6-1	230	Jr.
	68	Jeff Clausen	6-6	305	So.		39	Ben Buettenback	5-11	210	So.
TE	90	Tim Carpenter	6-3	255	Sr.	WILL	4	Octavious McFarlin	5-11	195	Sr.
-or-	34	Vershan Jackson	6-0	245	Sr.		1	Eric Johnson	6-0	205	Jr.
QB	7	Scott Frost	6-3	215	Sr.	LCB	11	Jerome Peterson	5-7	185	So.
	1	Frankie London	6-0	175	So.		27	Joe Walker	5-11	185	Fr.
FB	45	Joel Makovicka	5-11	235	Jr.	FS	3	Eric Warfield	6-0	195	Sr.
	40	Billy Legate	5-11	220	Jr.		19	Clint Finley	6-1	195	Fr.
IB	30	Ahman Green	6-0	212	Jr.	ROV	21	Mike Brown	6-0	200	So.
	4	DeAngelo Evans	5-9	210	So.		29	Gregg List	6-0	195	So.
WB	5	Shevin Wiggins	5-11	195	Jr.	RCB	22	Ralph Brown	5-11	180	So.
	14	Lance Brown	5-11	190	Jr.		2	Leslie Dennis	5-9	175	Sr.
PK	35	Kris Brown	5-10	205	Jr.	P	19	Jesse Kosch	6-0	185	Sr.

Players with starting experience in bold



Not Dead Yet

The nation may be ready to write Nebraska off, but the Huskers aren't ready to wave a surrender flag

By Mike Babcock

AMERICAN writer and humorist Mark Twain sent a cable to the Associated Press from London, England, in 1897. "The reports of my death are greatly exaggerated," it said.

So it is with the Nebraska football program in 1997. Even though the Cornhuskers came up short of winning a third consecutive national championship last season, their demise is hardly imminent.

They very well could be back on the national title trail in 1997. They should be, in fact. It doesn't require too much of a stretch of the imagination to envision Nebraska making a return trip to the Orange Bowl, which will have first choice from the Alliance national title contenders this season.

"We got caught," senior defensive tackle Jason Peter said of the 1996 team, which finished 11-2 and ranked No. 6 in the final polls. "I think this year, it looks positive, very positive the way guys are working. Last year, you could tell there was a drop-off. We had it (the national

title) for two years.

"You get used to winning, I guess, and that's when you get caught. That's what happened to us. We weren't ready. We weren't prepared to take on a 12- or 13-game season."

A season of not being No. 1 has caused the team to regain its focus. Nebraska is "definitely hungrier," senior quarterback Scott Frost said after the spring game. "We're going to fight back."

"There are definitely a bunch of fighters on this team."

That was apparent in the intensity of spring practice. After each of the major scrimmages, coach Tom Osborne remarked about the enthusiasm with which players went after each other.

Senior All-American rush end Grant Wistrom, who decided to stick around for his senior season instead of declaring for the National Football League draft, acknowledged the change in attitude over last spring. "Everybody's much more intense," he said after the third Saturday

scrimmage.

"If there's one thing we need to get out of this spring, it's that everybody needs to regain the focus they had two years ago. The focus wasn't there last year . . . scrimmages have been very high in intensity. Everybody's been bringing the wood. There's a lot of good hitting going on out there."

Sophomore Mike Brown, who was moved from cornerback to rover in the spring, agreed, even though he had nothing to which he could compare it. "All the seniors have said this spring seemed more intense than last year's. I wasn't here last year, but I believe it," he said before the Red-White game. "Everyone's out there giving 100 percent. They're just going out and giving it everything they have."

Brown was among several players who established themselves at the top of the depth chart in the spring, after being backups last season. He'll be one of three new starters in the secondary when the Cornhuskers open the 1997 season

against Akron at Memorial Stadium on Aug. 30.

Senior free safety Eric Warfield and sophomore cornerback Jerome Peterson are likely to be the others, barring something unforeseen. Sophomore cornerback Ralph Brown is the secondary's lone returning starter, although Warfield is about as experienced as a returning starter.

A solid secondary is essential to Nebraska's attacking, 4-3 base defense.

"I'm pleased with the physical part of the secondary," said defensive coordinator Charlie McBride. "All of those guys are physical, every one of them. That's what encourages you."

The starting linebackers all will be new, though that also is a technicality considering junior middle linebacker Jay Foreman started every game at strongside linebacker two seasons ago and alternated with Jon Hesse in the middle last season. Foreman is bigger and stronger, and just as fast.

Sophomore Brian Shaw emerged from the spring as the No. 1 strongside linebacker. And senior Octavious McFarlin, a backup rover last season, enters the fall No. 1 at weakside linebacker.

The defensive front is solid, if for no other reason than the return of Wistrom and Peter, both of whom are being promoted as All-America candidates. There isn't likely to be a better collegiate end-tackle tandem in the country. Both figure to be first-round NFL draft picks come next April.

With the 1-2 combination of juniors Chad Kelsay and Mike Rucker, there isn't likely to be a drop-off at the other rush end, despite the departure of All-American Jared Tomich. Rush end was a showcase position last season, and it will remain so under first-year coach Nelson Barnes.

Junior Jason Wiltz will enter fall camp as the No. 1 nosetackle.

In addition to those who worked their way to the top of the depth chart, there were numerous young players on defense who distinguished themselves during the spring, among them cornerback Joe Walker, rush end George Guidry, nosetackle Steve Warren, middle linebackers Ben Buettenback and Carlos Polk and weakside linebacker

Red Team Shakes Off Rust In 34-28 Spring Game Win

GETTING OFFENSIVE

Predictably, perhaps, the Red team won this year's Red-White game, as it has all but twice over the last 16 years. The score was 34-28, which was misleadingly close considering the Red team built a 31-7 lead in the first half.

The White team didn't make its run, which was aided by some coaching decisions that were based more on fan interest than sound principles, until late in the third quarter. Freshman Dan Alexander was a key figure in the rally, scoring two touchdowns and capturing the fancy of the fans.

Alexander, who appeared to be slated for fullback duty early in the spring but ended up playing more at I-back, rammed in from a yard out for the first touchdown with 1:05 left in the third quarter.

Earlier in the 16-play, 80-yard drive, on a second-and-14, the 250-pound Alexander bulled his way through a jam-up at the line of scrimmage and ran 29 yards before freshman safety Clint Finley brought him down. Three plays before the touchdown, Alexander bolted for an 8-yard gain.

Both carries earned Alexander enthusiastic cheers, as did his 27-yard run off his left side for a touchdown with 9:09 remaining in the fourth quarter. "I saw the cornerback and that's about it," Alexander said. "That was the biggest hole I had seen all spring. The linemen did a great job."

That score cut the lead to 31-21. But quarterback Frankie London was stopped by Ben Buettenback, a spring surprise at middle linebacker, on a two-point conversion attempt.

Alexander finished with 62 yards rushing on eight carries. It was later learned that he had torn his ACL in the game and his status in the fall is still undermined.

Miller, also a freshman, was injured early in the spring but finished strong.

Both, however, were essentially understudies in the spring game performance. The lead characters were those who have stepped up to fill starting positions — five on offense and eight on defense, with some qualifications. Middle linebacker Jay Foreman and free safety Eric Warfield, for example, aren't returning starters. But based on their experience, they might as well be considered that.

Foreman, who traded the No. 56 he wore his first two seasons for No. 44, was the leading tackler in the game with nine. Octavious McFarlin, Chad Kelsay and Mike Brown, all first-team defenders, were involved in seven tackles each, while Buettenback led the Red defense with seven tackles.

Four offensive linemen besides Josh Heskew and Eric Anderson were among the 21 players who didn't suit up for the Red-White Game because of injuries — 129 players did suit up, however.

Quarterback Scott Frost, who was going through his third spring at Nebraska, directed the victory, rushing for 31 yards and two touchdowns but completing only 7-of-27 passes for 109 yards. Osborne didn't seem concerned, however. "Scott didn't complete a whole lot of passes," Osborne said.

I-back Ahman Green was the afternoon's leading rusher, despite getting only 12 carries. He gained 96 yards, including 67 on one run, on the second play of the Red's second series. "I haven't been running in the open much lately, so it felt good, and awkward," said Green. ■

One of the biggest surprises this spring, freshman Dan Alexander spearheaded the White rally rushing for two touchdowns.

Jon Waller



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Eric Johnson, who will be in only his second season at Nebraska.

There were others, of course, "really a bunch of them who caught my eye," Peter said in answer to a question following the Red-White game. "I don't want to single anybody out."

The bottom line is, "I'd have to say, as a whole, we've improved (on defense)," he said.

Last season's defense is tough to follow. It ranked in the top seven nationally in four major defensive categories and was among the most offensive defenses in Cornhusker history. Even so, "we have a chance to be pretty decent on defense," said Osborne. "And that's encouraging because I think most years when our defense has been fairly dominant, we've had really good teams."

Despite the loss of eight starters, six of whom were chosen in the NFL draft (and another who signed as a free agent), "athletically we're still pretty good on defense," Osborne said.

The offense is flush with returning starters — six, officially, but eight from the 41-21 Orange Bowl victory against Virginia Tech. That's a definite plus as the Cornhuskers try to regain the national rushing title, after a season in which they ranked fourth, averaging 291.9 yards per game on the ground.

Part of the problem last season was early uncertainty in the offensive line. And part of it was the health of the I-backs, all of whom were hobbled by injuries at some point in the season.

What happens over the summer will be a key to success in the fall. And it needs to happen in Lincoln, according to Peter. "Everyone, I think, is going to stick around this summer," he said.

"You've got your guys out there, your leaders, to push each other through that (conditioning). I could go home, and I could tell myself: 'Yeah, I'm going to work out.' But it's not like I'm out there in the stadium with (someone) breathing down my neck. I think, I'm going to stay."

Peter and Wistrom will be among the team leaders. So they're a good measure of the temper of Osborne's 25th team. Ultimately, however, each player must take responsibility for himself.

"You know, I think with just having the national title taken away from us last year, the guys are hungry," said Peter. "They want it back." ■

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Dan Young's concern is results, not aesthetics. Consider Jesse Kosch. Nebraska's senior punter isn't "picture-perfect," Young said. "He's a soccer player and maybe comes across his body a little bit. But he catches the ball so well and has such an explosive leg."

Because of those qualities, Kosch might well rank with the best punters in Cornhusker history. "I would think so," said Young. "He should be. (Darin) Erstad could have been very good had he stayed another year because he had a tremendously strong leg. And Mike Stigge became a very solid kicker for us."

"But Jesse's right up (there) with any of them. He has a lot of pride in what he does."

Kosch's statistics certainly support such an assertion. He averaged 44.7 yards per punt last season, to rank 11th nationally and break the school record, held since 1981 by Grant Campbell.

Campbell averaged 43.36 yards per punt on 42 punts in 1981 to break a school record that had held since 1947, when Jack Pesek averaged 42.7 yards per punt, also on 42 punts.

Pesek averaged 41.5 yards per punt during his two seasons, the Cornhusker career record until Stigge came along. Stigge, a two-time academic All-American and four-time academic all-conference honoree, averaged 41.75 yards per punt, on a record 167 punts from 1989 through 1992.

Though he won't break Stigge's record for punts, Kosch is on pace to break Stigge's career record for average. In two seasons, Kosch has punted 71 times for an average of 43.03 yards per punt.

Kosch would have to regress in order not to break the career record. And that isn't likely, according to Young. "He's really become a very consistent punter. He was an I-back and kicker, and played some defense in high school. So I'm sure he didn't concentrate on it (punting) as much."

Junior Kris Brown gave the Huskers a lift in 1996 as for the second year in a row he led Nebraska in scoring with 86 points.

PK outlook

returning

Kris Brown (5-10, 205, Jr.)
Ted Retzlaff (6-0, 190, Sr.)

lost

None

P outlook

returning

Jesse Kosch (6-0, 185, Sr.)
Bill Lafleur (6-0, 205, Jr.)

lost

None

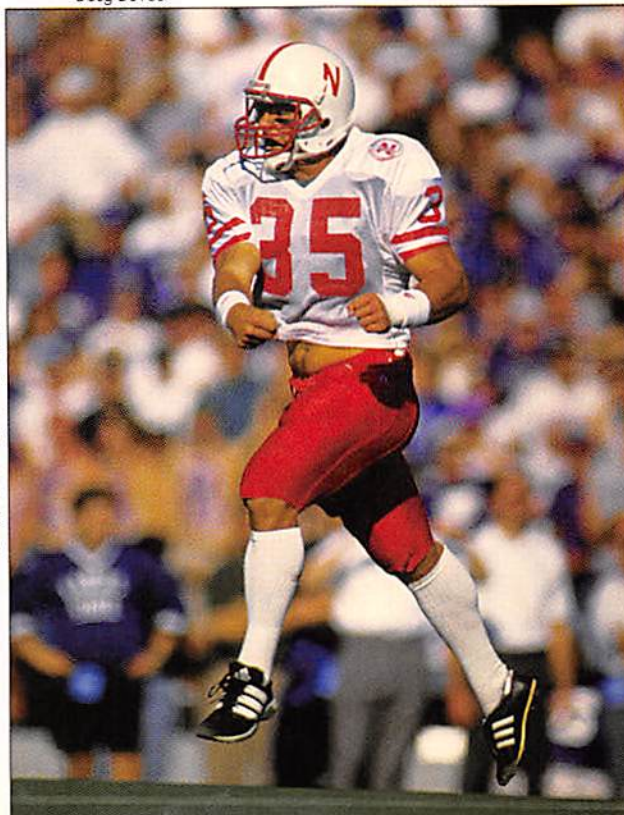
"Even his first couple of years here, he was very inconsistent. At times, he's hit the ball well. At other times, he had some very ugly hits," Young said. "But now he very seldom shanks it."

In addition, "he just doesn't level off. It seems like he's always getting better," said Young.

The same has been true of junior place-kicker Kris Brown, who, like Kosch, will rank with the best the Cornhuskers have ever had, barring injury. He's two short of the career record for field goals, 39 short of the career record for points by a kicker, 43 short of the career record for extra-point kicks and 129 short of the career scoring record (312), held by Heisman Trophy winner Mike Rozier.

Brown has two seasons to reach

Doug DeVoe



those totals. He'll likely break all the records except Rozier's this season. "It'll be hard for anybody to replace him (atop the career charts) unless they can start kicking right away, as a freshman, like he did," Young said. "Kris has been good from Day One."

Brown, of course, has been Nebraska's place-kicker since the first game of his freshman season. He has led the Cornhuskers in scoring in each of his seasons, with 97 points in 1995 and 86 points in 1996. He has been successful on 108-of-112 extra-point kicks and 25-of-35 field goal attempts.

"The thing about place-kickers at Nebraska is, if you come out and miss a couple, then Coach (Tom)

Kickers

Osborne starts going for the fourth downs," Young said with a laugh.

"But if you show you can hit them, you're going to get on the field a lot more. I think Kris knows that. He's anxious to get every shot he can at getting on the field and doing what he does best."

Brown's confidence as a freshman complemented his ability. Young kickers "have to have confidence in what they're doing. Some think they've got to get all their timing down right away. It takes them a month to get ready. But Kris works at it enough that he knows he could come in and kick at any time."

"He's a smart kid, a self-starter. You don't have to tell him what to do and when to do it. Kris knows what he's got to do. And he's just a pleasure to work with."

Kosch and Brown ensure a solid kicking game, with junior Bill Lafleur and senior Ted Retzlaff as the top backups at punter and place-kicker, respectively. Junior Brian Morro, a walk-on from Middletown, N.J., punted well in practice last fall, said Young. "But he didn't kick quite as well this spring."

"Our kicking game can be good," Osborne said, understating the situation.

"There is very little, if anything, to be concerned about." ■

As far as Scott Frost is concerned, familiarity breeds aggressiveness, not contempt. That's the value of a season's experience in Nebraska's offense for the senior quarterback.

"By becoming more familiar with this system, you can be more aggressive," Frost said after a practice in the spring. "I think with all the things the quarterbacks are asked to do in this offense, with the

more, he completed 33-of-77 passes (.429) for 464 yards and two touchdowns and five interceptions.

At Nebraska, he completed 104-of-200 passes for 1,440 yards and 13 touchdowns, with only three interceptions. In the final six games, he was even better: 60-of-107 for 845 yards.

Although he intends to be more aggressive this season, Frost also expects to be more patient, if those qualities aren't mutually exclusive.

well for the fall.

Gill wasn't worried about those numbers, either. He changed Frost's throwing motion "just slightly," he said. "But I guess I'm not a person who's just totally going to make a drastic change on him because he's always shown me he can be very accurate. There is no need to make any changes in his throwing motion, just some things with his feet and his balance, to stay on balance . . . to be more accurate.

"Scott has been very, very consistent, as far as I'm concerned."

After Frost, there is considerably less certainty about the rank order. The competition in fall camp will include not only sophomores Frankie London and Jeff Perino, junior Monte Christo and redshirted freshman Jay Runty but also scholar-

Quarterback

passing game and especially the option game, aggressiveness is probably the key to playing the position.

"And it's hard to be really aggressive when you're not sure of yourself."

Not that Frost lacked confidence last season. But the option offense places some unique demands on the quarterback, particularly one who spent his first two collegiate seasons in a pro-style system, as Frost did at Stanford. "We ask a lot of our quarterbacks," said quarterbacks coach Turner Gill.

"I know it's a very demanding position anywhere you play. But you're taking more hits when you're asked to run. People don't quite understand that."

Frost understands. Even though he was sacked only 10 times in 13 games, counting the Orange Bowl, he ran with the ball 135 times in those games. And each time he ran, he was tackled. Plus, he took some hits after the 222 passes (including the bowl game) he threw. So the hits added up.

Running the option makes getting into a rhythm as a passer more difficult. As a dropback passer, "you can get into more of a rhythm," said Frost. "I definitely noticed that at Stanford."

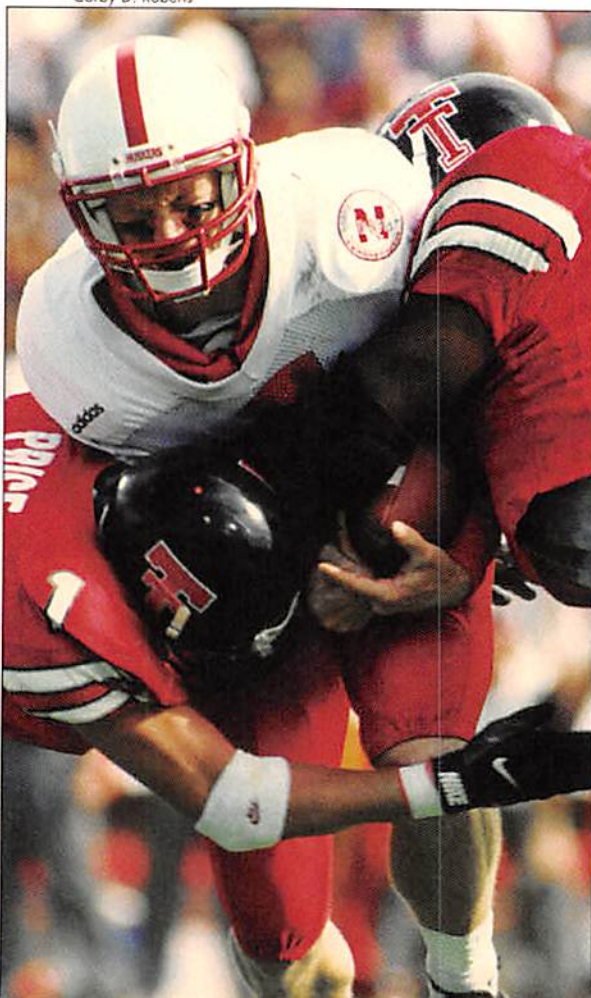
Even so, Frost was more proficient last season than he was at Stanford. As a sopho-

That's another result of his experience running options.

Based on his numbers, Frost struggled with his passing in his third spring at Nebraska. In three major Saturday scrimmages, he completed only 7-of-20 passes for 150 yards, with one interception and no touchdowns. The Red-White game was even less impressive: 7-of-27 for 109 yards.

Frost's spring statistics also reflect a defensive dominance that bodes

Corby D. Roberts



A tough inside runner, Scott Frost needs to be more consistent with his passing in order for the offense to flourish.

QB outlook

returning

Scott Frost (6-3, 215, Sr.)
Frankie London (6-0, 175, So.)
Monte Christo (6-0, 195, Jr.)
Jeff Perino (6-2, 200, So.)
Jay Runty (6-0, 180, Fr.)

lost

Matt Turman

ship freshmen Eric Crouch and Bobby Newcombe.

"We're going to give those guys a chance. We told the two freshmen they would have a shot to see what they can do," Gill said. "It's going to be tough. I mean, it's very, very hard to do as a freshman.

"It's also tough because we've got some talent already here, guys who are ready to step in."

Ideally, at least one of the freshman could be redshirted. But that remains to be seen.

The continued development of London, Perino, Christo and Runty will be a factor.

"All those guys have talent. I was pleased with what they did in the spring. They're all going to help our football team, I think, at some point in their careers . . . some sooner than others," Gill said.

London emerged from the spring a provisional No. 2 on the depth chart.

"He's young, so we've still got some time with him, and we look for him to get better and better with repetition," Gill said. "Perino is young, too, you know. He's also been here just two years." ■

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Damon Benning was in the mix at I-back. Evans had to wait his turn, and carried only seven times in the first three games. He didn't play against Arizona State.

Even so, once he got going, Evans was difficult to stop, despite a groin-related injury that grew worse as the season progressed — and kept him on the sideline for all of spring practice.

As it was, he rushed for 776 yards

IB outlook

returning

Ahman Green (6-0, 212, Jr.)
DeAngelo Evans (5-9, 210, So.)
Jay Sims (6-1, 220, Sr.)

lost

Damon Benning

FB outlook

returning

Joel Makovicka (5-11, 235, Jr.)
Billy Legate (5-11, 220, Jr.)
Josh Cobb (5-11, 230, Jr.)
Ben Kingston (6-1, 230, So.)
Dan Alexander (6-1, 240, Fr.)
Willie Miller (6-1, 240, Fr.)

lost

Brian Schuster

and 14 touchdowns. "I'm not going to predict what I could have done if I had been healthy. But I think it could have been a lot better," Evans said.

Green's team-high total of 917 yards rushing could have been a lot better, also, if he hadn't been plagued by injuries.

"I kept trying to push myself a little bit too hard and kept re-injuring

Tailback/Fullback

Ahman Green and DeAngelo Evans could form the best I-back tandem in Nebraska history. They would both have to be healthy, of course. And they probably would have to do it this season.

If he returns to the form he showed as a freshman, Green could leave early for the NFL. Even Tom Osborne has acknowledged that possibility. And some have suggested Evans could go pro, too.

An early departure by Evans, after his sophomore season anyway,

is a bit more speculative. Or, at least, Cornhusker fans would like to think so. But with his talent, you never know.

In only one season has Nebraska been blessed with two 1,000-yard rushers at I-back. Calvin Jones and Derek Brown were nicknamed the "We-backs," after each ran for 1,000 yards in 1992. Jones rushed for 1,210 yards and scored 14 touchdowns. Brown had 1,011 yards and four touchdowns.

It's a bit of a stretch to say Green and Evans could have each rushed for 1,000 yards last season if they had remained healthy. Senior

it," Green said of a turf toe injury. Then came the stress fracture. His left foot "wasn't 100 percent, I'd say, until after the bowl game.

"It was basically after the season, when I could rest it."

Green was healthy during the spring, and running the way he did his first season when he set a Cornhusker freshman record by rushing for 1,086 yards and scoring 13 touchdowns.

A slimmed down (from 226 pounds to 212) and healthy Ahman Green showed this spring that he is still one of the nation's best tailbacks.

Jon Waller

Green also was a bit more sleek in the spring than he was last season, if a 212-pound running back can be described as sleek. He played at about 226 pounds as a sophomore.

Last season was only the fourth in the last 20 that the Cornhuskers didn't have at least one 1,000-yard rusher. Green got 155 carries in 10 games last season. Evans had 148 carries. And quarterback Scott Frost was third on the team in carries with 126 attempts for 438 yards — fourth behind Benning's 465.

Not having Evans healthy in the spring was a concern, certainly. It meant that often-overlooked and under-appreciated senior Jay Sims got a few more carries. Powerful Dan Alexander, a redshirted freshman, got an opportunity to show what he could do as an I-back as well as a fullback.

Sims, like Green, is a known quantity. As a result, his playing time was limited in the spring, in order to evaluate players such as Alexander, who rushed for 97 yards and one touchdown on 21 carries during three major Saturday scrimmages before finishing with a flourish in the Red-White game.

Scholarship recruits Correll Buckhalter and Dan White will join

the I-back competition in the fall, although Alexander's emergence will have some impact on their chances of playing right away.

Junior Joel Makovicka is poised to replace Brian Schuster as the starting fullback, with junior Billy Legate, who walked-on like Makovicka and Schuster, heading the list of backups. Junior Josh Cobb, a walk-on from Wallace, Neb., and redshirted scholarship freshman Willie Miller could also contribute.

Cobb, who also can play I-back, was the leading rusher in one of the Saturday scrimmages in the spring, gaining 65 yards on 10 carries, while Miller was impressive in the Red-White game.

Sophomore Ben Kingston, yet another walk-on fullback from Omaha, suffered an ACL injury in the spring game, an injury Osborne said he anticipated would

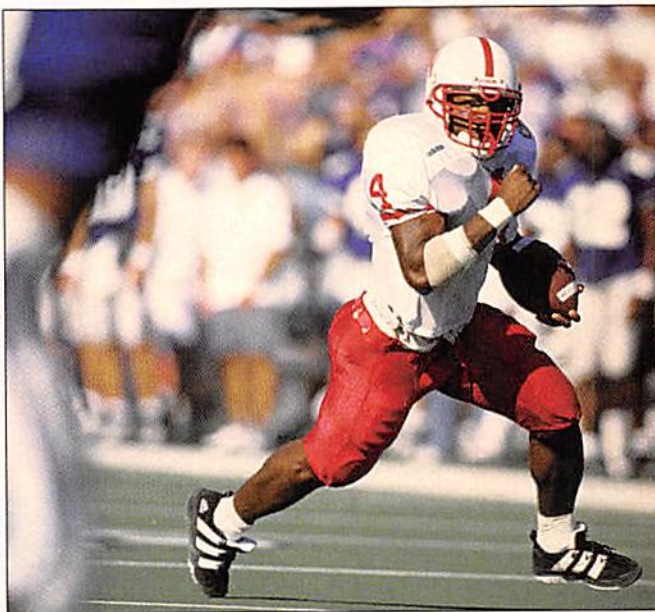
Not every young player could miss spring practice without it affecting him significantly, but then again DeAngelo Evans is not an ordinary athlete.

carry over into the fall.

Whether or not Green and Evans will provide Nebraska with its most productive I-back tandem ever will depend, in large measure, on the blocking of the fullbacks and the offensive line, of course. But they have the ability to go down in Cornhusker history before moving on to the next level.

Green and Evans could become the "We-backs II." ■

Doug DeVoe



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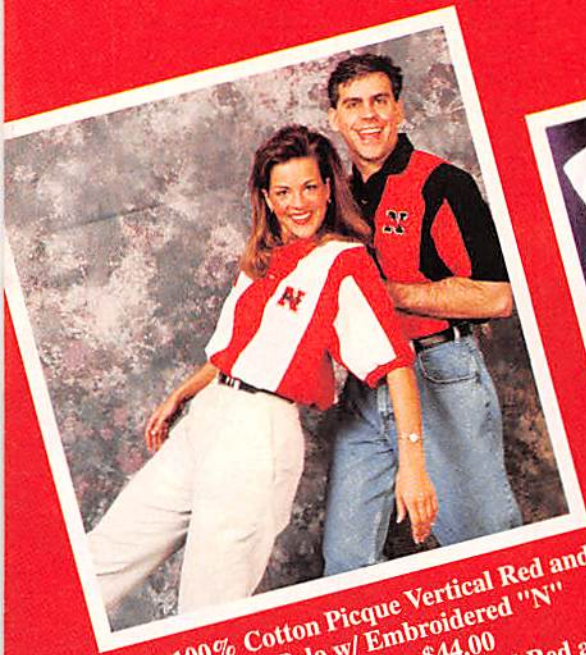
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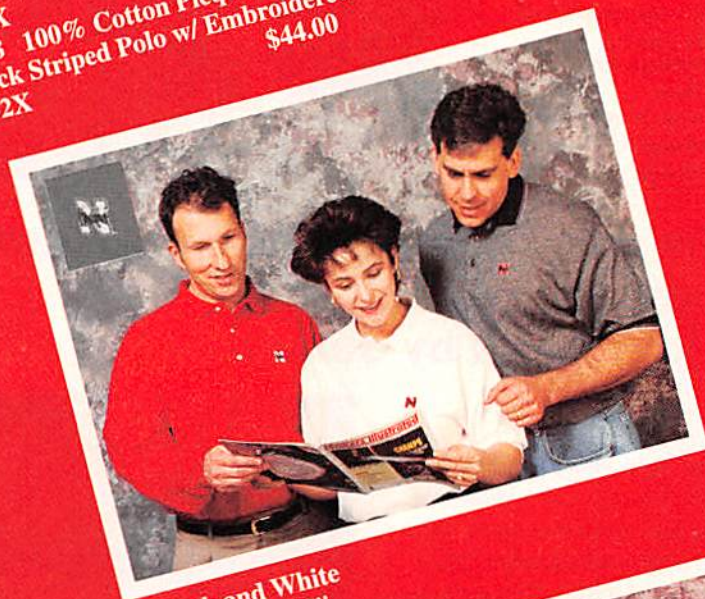
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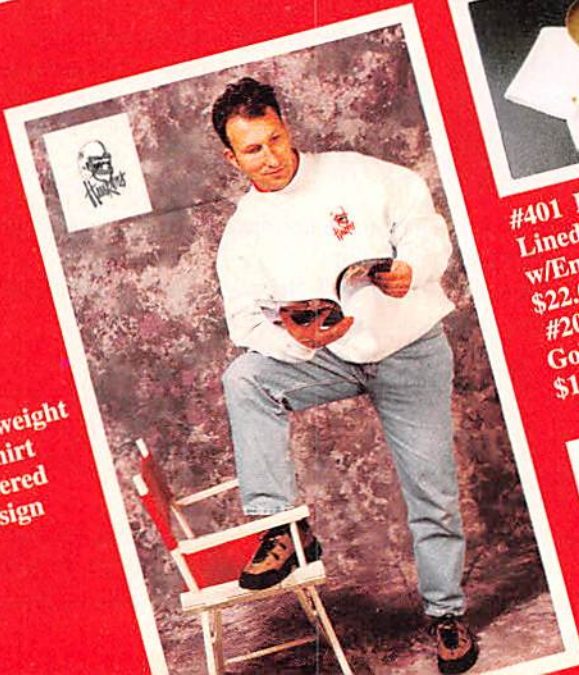
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Tim Carpenter has caught only two passes during his three seasons at Nebraska. His first reception was in 1994, against Pacific. His second was in 1995, also against Pacific.

Pacific discontinued its football program after the 1995 season.

You can draw your own conclusions.

Columbus, Neb., wears jersey No. 90, of course.

Despite the personal frustration, Carpenter made a significant contribution to Nebraska's offense last season. Cornhusker coach Tom Osborne noted during one of his weekly news conferences that Carpenter "has been a great blocker for us. He's hurting a little bit, misses about one day a week of practice.

"But he's done just a tremendous

Solich "taught me how to block," he said.

"I was a running back in high school. I wasn't really a blocker at all."

He didn't catch many passes in high school, either. But he's worked on that, just like he worked on rehabilitating his right knee. "I'm not a great route runner or anything, but I feel I can catch the ball, and that's all you really need to be able to do: get open and catch the ball," Carpenter said.

"Tim's not quite as fluid of a route runner yet as, say, Sheldon Jackson. But he's coming along. We can definitely use him as a receiver this season," receivers coach Ron Brown said in the spring.

Sheldon Jackson isn't quite the blocker Carpenter is. That's, in part, a function of his height.

"He's got to get his pad level down a little bit," Brown said.

Tight End

OK. So there's no correlation between Carpenter's lack of pass receptions and the demise of football at Pacific. But it's nice irony. That Carpenter hasn't caught a pass since the fourth game of his sophomore season has more to do with his physical condition than with the Cornhuskers' opposition.

A torn anterior cruciate ligament in his right knee, suffered the first week of spring practice a year ago, restricted his movement, and when a receiver can't move to get open, it's difficult to catch passes. It got to the point last season that opposing teams never even took him seriously as a receiver.

"They would holler: 'No. 90. No. 90. This side.' When they'd see No. 90 in the game, (they knew) it was a run. Toward the end of the year, it started getting halfway frustrating," Carpenter said.

The senior tight end from

job with his physical condition."

Carpenter underwent reconstructive surgery on the knee and wasn't expected to play last season until late September. Even though he didn't start, he played a considerable amount in the Sept. 7 opener, prompting Osborne to remark: "There's a guy who's really been impressive to me."

Beyond his comeback from injuries — he missed two games his sophomore season because of arthroscopic knee surgery — Carpenter has been impressive in his ability to recognize and then capitalize on his opportunities. For example, he was a running back in high school, and he was recruited by the Cornhuskers to be a fullback, the position at which he spent his redshirt season.

Blocking certainly wasn't among the things he did best when he was a freshman. That was an acquired skill. Running backs coach Frank

TE outlook

returning

Tim Carpenter (6-3, 255, Sr.)
Vershon Jackson (6-0, 245, Sr.)
Sheldon Jackson (6-4, 250, Jr.)
T.J. DeBates (6-3, 245, So.)
Dorrick Roy (6-3, 240, Jr.)

lost

None

Vershon Jackson, like Carpenter, doesn't have that problem. He's listed at 6-feet tall. "Vershon and Tim are already down there," said Brown. "They have tremendous centers of gravity."

Carpenter and the two Jacksons give Nebraska experience and depth at tight end. But with the Cornhuskers' double-tight alignments, and the fact that Carpenter and Vershan Jackson are seniors, Brown would like to be able to get a young player or two into the rotation from time to time.

Based on spring practice, the best of the youngsters is probably 6-foot-3, 245-pound sophomore T.J. DeBates, a scholarship recruit from Stewartville, Minn. "T.J. is very quick," Brown said. "He's light years ahead of where he was a year ago in knowing our offense."

DeBates "has really come on," as has 6-foot-3, 240-pound junior Dorrick Roy, said Brown. ■

A converted fullback, Vershan Jackson finished 1996 as the Huskers' third-leading receiver with 10 catches for 220 yards and four scores.



Jon Waller

Shevin Wiggins rushed for 2,267 yards and scored 32 touchdowns as a high school senior. He was an extraordinary running back, and Florida's prep Offensive Player of the Year in

1993.

Nebraska recruited him as a wingback, however, which was fine with Wiggins. In his own estimation, he was too small to play I-back for the Cornhuskers.

"When I came here, I weighed 169 . . . 170, maybe," he said.

He began last season sharing second team on the depth chart with Lance Brown. He finished it by start-

and rank with the fastest in Cornhusker history.

Edwards ran the 40 in 4.88 seconds in pre-winter conditioning testing.

"He probably improved his speed faster than anybody I've ever seen," Brown said.

Edwards improved in other areas, as well. But he emerged from spring

Receiver

practice at No. 3 on the depth chart, behind senior Jeff Lake and junior Kenny Cheatham, who are interchangeable at No. 1.

"At split end, it's as good of a group as we've had," said Brown.

In addition to being the fastest group of receivers Brown has coached at Nebraska, "it's also the largest, particularly the split ends, in terms of height and size," he said. "It's a great combination."

Lake and Cheatham both are listed at 6-foot-4 and 210 pounds.

"And you're talking about both guys being in the mid-10s (seconds) in the 100 meters," Brown said. "They're big and fast . . . quick fast. They're really quick; they can get to the outside."

This year's receivers won't be mistaken for Brown's "itty-bitty committee," which included Corey Dixon, Reggie Baul, Abdul Muhammad, Riley Washington and Brendan Holbein.

None of those players stood taller than 5-9. "But I tell you what, I wouldn't have traded any of those 'itty-bitty' guys. They had good speed and quickness," said Brown.

Even so, Brown appreciates the size Cheatham and Lake bring to the wide receiver position. "You'd like to get guys like Cheatham and Lake. Size-wise, that's what you'd like to have," he said.

Lake came to the Cornhuskers as a walk-on, as did junior Billy Haafke, the No. 4 split end. Haafke, who's from South Sioux City, Neb., won't win any footraces with the other wide receivers.

"He's a guy who doesn't have great speed," Brown said. "But he's got pretty good hands, and he's an excellent blocker, a very tenacious type of a guy . . . Billy's solid."

Tenacity characterizes all of the wide receivers. They're good down-

field blockers, which should come as no surprise. In Nebraska's system, receivers get on the field by being able to block. Lake and Cheatham caught only 11 passes between them last season, for 206 yards and two touchdowns.

The competition in the spring was no less intense at wingback than it was at split end. In addition to Wiggins, the top four included Lance Brown, Sean Wieting and John Gibson. Sean Applegate, a sophomore walk-on from Lincoln, Neb., High School couldn't crack the top four.

But "Sean's a guy who, in time, will be a very good player," said Brown.

"The wingbacks . . . we've got a multitude of guys who can play, several of them who can really get out there and scrap around. We've got a couple with excellent talent, great

Jon Waller



There's nothing "itty-bitty" about Nebraska's receiver corps that include two 6-foot-4 players in split ends Kenny Cheatham (above) and Jeff Lake.

talent."

Gibson, a redshirted freshman from Papillion, Neb., is among those to whom Brown referred. He had the physical ability to play without redshirting, if there hadn't been so much depth.

Lance Brown complements athletic ability, shaped by a dance background, with exuberance. He was in the regular rotation last season, catching five passes for 101 yards and one touchdown. He joins Wiggins in providing a one-two punch at wingback, like Lake and Cheatham provide at split end. ■

SE outlook

returning

Jeff Lake (6-4, 210, Sr.)
Kenny Cheatham (6-4, 210, Jr.)
Billy Haafke (5-11, 190, Jr.)
J. R. Edwards (6-2, 195, So.)
Craig Fischer (6-0, 170, So.)

lost

Brendan Holbein

WB outlook

returning

Shevin Wiggins (5-11, 195, Jr.)
Lance Brown (5-11, 190, Jr.)
Sean Wieting (5-9, 190, Sr.)
John Gibson (6-0, 185, Fr.)
Sean Applegate (5-9, 175, So.)

lost

Jon Vedral

ing the Orange Bowl game, after Jon Vedral was suspended from the team.

By then, he was pushing 200 pounds. He weighed as much as 205 pounds after the Orange Bowl, in fact. He plans to play this season at 195. "I've always said, when you try to recruit a wingback at Nebraska, that's kind of the ideal model," Cornhusker receivers coach Ron Brown said of Wiggins.

Not only did he start the bowl game, he was Nebraska's leading receiver, catching three passes for 36 yards. He caught only three passes, total, during the regular season, gaining 45 yards.

"This is the fastest (group) we've had since I've been here," said Brown, who is beginning his 11th season at Nebraska.

None was more tremendous than the 4.39 sophomore split end J.R. Edwards ran in the 40-yard dash to lead post-winter conditioning tests

The respect Aaron Taylor has earned in three seasons at Nebraska can be seen in the All-America honors he received a year ago from the Walter Camp Foundation, the *Football News*, the Football Writers, *American Football Quarterly* and the American Football Foundation.

He was a first-team selection, according to all of those organiza-

— won the Outland Trophy. Steinkuhler doubled up, also earning the Lombardi Award as a senior in 1983.

It is in such company that Taylor belongs, already. And he's going to be better.

"Aaron did a good job at center last year," Tenopir said. "But he's not as fluid at center as he is at guard. Without the extra responsibility of having to snap the ball, you

Offensive Line

tions. He also was a semifinalist for both the Outland Trophy and the Lombardi Award... as a center.

Obviously, Taylor played well last season. But the thing is, center "wasn't a natural position for him," said Cornhusker offensive line coach Milt Tenopir. "Guard is. He's just a natural guard."

And guard is the position at which he'll play, full-time, this season.

So how good can the senior from Wichita Falls, Texas, be? Well, Nebraska has had six guards who have earned All-America honors during Tom Osborne's 24 seasons as head coach. Three of those six were consensus selections, and two — Dean Steinkuhler and Will Shields

get his full potential.

"He's just a fluid football player, who operates very well at the guard spot."

Taylor, whom nearly every major college considered too short to play offensive line, isn't complaining about switching back to the position he played his first two seasons at Nebraska.

"Guard... all guard, I like it," Taylor said. "It's nice."

Not that he complained about moving to center last season. In fact, after junior center Josh Heskew suffered a broken foot during post-winter conditioning tests, "I was ready to move over (in the spring)," said Taylor. "I'd still like to get in a few snaps this fall at center. I don't know if I will or not."

"It doesn't bother me, where I play. Wherever they put me will be fine. I'll go out and give it that old college try. I know what I'm supposed to do at each position now, so it'll be fun wherever I play."

Taylor has always been uncomplaining, a coach's dream. Even though he was first-team all-conference and a third-team *Football News* All-

The experiment with All-American Aaron Taylor at center is over as he'll move back to his natural position of guard this fall.

LT outlook

returning

Fred Pollack (6-4, 310, Sr.)
Adam Julch (6-5, 310, So.)
Lonnie Fulton (6-5, 250, Fr.)
Justin Ferrell (6-2, 280, Fr.)

lost

Adam Treu
Kory Mikos

LG outlook

returning

Aaron Taylor (6-1, 305, Sr.)
James Sherman (6-2, 300, So.)
Ben Gessford (6-2, 285, Jr.)
Sasha Becvarovski (6-5, 240, Fr.)

lost

Chris Dishman
Matt Vrzal

CG outlook

returning

Josh Heskew (6-3, 280, Jr.)
Matt Hoskinson (6-1, 280, Sr.)
Matt Baldwin (6-1, 290, So.)
David Webber (6-3, 285, Fr.)

lost

None

RG outlook

returning

Jon Zatechka (6-2, 290, Sr.)
Mike Van Cleave (6-2, 295, Sr.)
Brandt Wade (6-2, 300, Jr.)
Russ Hochstein (6-4, 260, Fr.)

lost

None

RT outlook

returning

Eric Anderson (6-4, 305, Sr.)
Jeff Clausen (6-6, 305, So.)
Jason Schwab (6-1, 295, Fr.)
Billy Diekmann (6-4, 265, Fr.)

lost

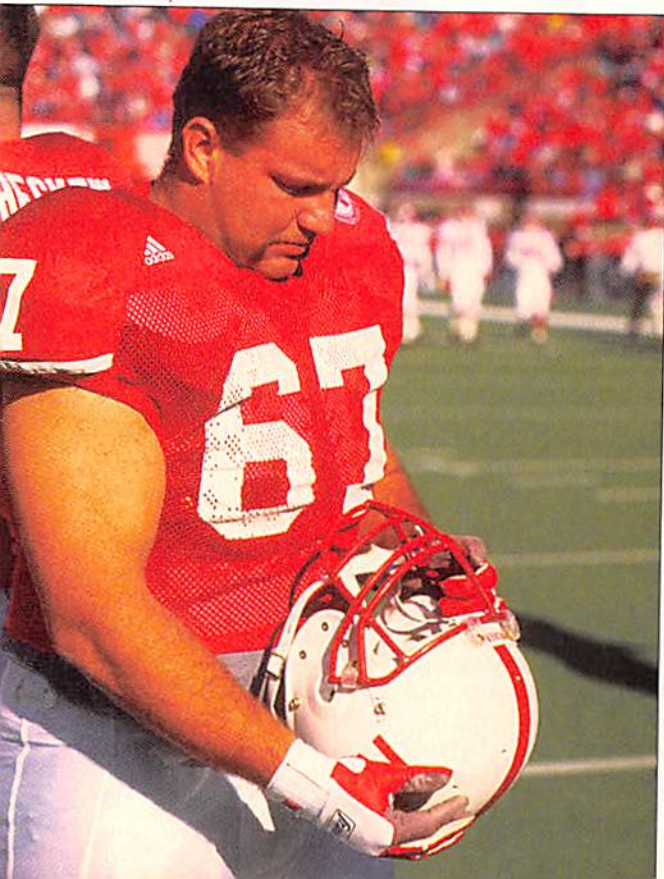
None

American as a guard his sophomore year, he willingly moved to center, following the departure of All-American center Aaron Graham to the NFL.

At one point last season, Osborne said he was concerned that an outstanding guard had been turned into an average center. As the season went along, however, Osborne's opinion changed.

There are significant differences in the positions, according to Taylor. At guard, "you're basically one-on-one with the defensive lineman. You take your man straight-up," he said.

"You usually don't get any help from the center or tackle on certain plays. You get to pull out in the open and make some big hits... on a lot of traps, a lot of sweeps and a lot of



Bob Berry

options. At center, you're just scrambling (at) people's legs, trying to control the interior linemen.

"That's basically the difference, that and the footwork's a lot different."

Ah yes, the footwork, something about which you might think powerful, 300-pound offensive linemen bent on destruction needn't concern themselves. But the truth is, they do.

"You've got to be real precise (in footwork) at each position," said Taylor.

In fact, without the proper footwork, strength and quickness, the staples of an offensive lineman, are of little consequence. "Footwork is really important, especially here," Taylor said. "I mean, the way our schemes are, if your feet aren't correct, you could break down, and if you break down, it shuts the whole play down. If you do get your footwork correct, though, amazing things will happen."

Getting the footwork correct "is pretty tough," he said. Even veterans such as himself and fellow seniors Jon Zatechka and Eric Anderson "have a breakdown every now and then. Sometimes, we're good enough to overcome it. Sometimes, we're

not. But it's a key factor in running our offense."

Like most offensive linemen, Taylor didn't realize the importance of footwork when he arrived at Nebraska for his freshman year. In high school, he simply overpowered opponents. There's more to it than that at the collegiate level, however. "I thought it was, you just go straight at the guy," he said. "But no, you're got to take two or three steps . . . it's boom, boom, boom, before you engage the guy."

"Most young guys don't know how important it is. Of course, the coaches let them know pretty quick, like, they're not going to play if they don't do the things the right way, and with a lot of intensity."

Proper footwork is essential in coordinating the movements in the offensive line. The players must work together; they're responsible not only for themselves but for everyone else.

Communication is essential, and must become second-nature, which was a focus for Taylor during spring practice, not only because of his return to guard full-time but also because the tackle alongside him, senior Fred Pollack, is a new starter.

Everyone else started the Orange Bowl game.

Working with someone new "does take some adjustment," said Taylor, who also rotated at guard last season. "But Fred was swinging last year with the No. 1's, so I got to run with him. I know basically how he reacts. We get down in our stance and we say: 'All right, you and I have to go to the frontside line-backer, to the middle backer, or whatnot,' and we know what each other is thinking."

"It hasn't been a hard learning process, like I probably anticipated it would be. I think Fred was wondering how I was going to work with him, too. We've gotten along real good."

Such concerns are left on the practice field, anyway. In a game, there isn't time to worry about the lineman next to you. "Everybody's doing the same thing," Taylor said. "Fred might down-block better or pull better than somebody else. But you really can't tell while you're in the game."

Taylor expects the same from Pollack that he expects of himself . . . as one of the best guards ever to play for the Cornhuskers. ■

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As usual, Jason Peter's account was entertaining, his attention to detail a newspaper reporter's dream. Nebraska's senior defensive tackle is not a man of few words in such situations.

Peter was discussing his play during the Red-White game and brought up the subject of Aaron Taylor, against whom he had been matched. Taylor is an All-American offensive guard.

"Aaron Taylor . . . he likes to cheat," Peter said.

Peter smiled, then proceeded to support his claim.

"He's got this little thing going with me, you know, Texas versus New Jersey," said Peter, who is from Locust, N.J. Taylor is from Wichita Falls, Texas. "So he goes out there, and he's got this jersey . . . it's hanging off of him, all right? I can't grab onto him because my hands are slipping off him."

"Then he and Fred Pollack got me going backward, like this . . ."

Pollack plays alongside Taylor, at left offensive tackle.

Peter demonstrated as he continued. "I'm looking up at the stars," he said.

"It's frustrating, I'll tell you."

Peter won't find himself matched against offensive linemen any better than Taylor and Pollack. And his example notwithstanding, it's reasonable to assume he held his own in the spring game.

Comparing Peter to most of the tackles who have preceded him is difficult because of Nebraska's change to a 4-3 base defense, according to defensive coordinator Charlie McBride. "Jason's a lot quicker than all those before him," McBride said.

"He's got great quickness, and better instincts, probably, than John Parrella. Jason could be a defensive end, too. In that position, he gets put in a lot of one-on-one situations and he's been able to beat most people. They should watch the film of the Colorado game. He played really well."

Peter more than held his own against the interior of the Buffaloes' line, which included 300-pound All-American guard and first-round NFL draft choice Chris Naeole. Peter

was involved in five tackles, including two for losses. He broke up a pass and was credited with five quarterback hurries.

He also will be a key factor in an otherwise young and inexperienced defensive interior this season, following the departure of reliable, and seemingly indestructible, Jeff Ogard.

Ogard's likely replacement at

ed an entire spring of learning, which was a benefit of his being able to enroll at mid-year. Now, however, "he's pretty much out of it," said McBride. "When you get into the fall, you just can't be messing around with people. It's going to be tough for him to play."

McBride's had to change his plan for rotating tackles. Instead of swinging between the two positions, Wiltz settled in at nosetackle, with Warren and Drum, who got a late start in the spring recovering from an injury, competing for the top back-up spot, leaving Allen as the top backup to Peter.

Almanzar, who missed much of the spring including the Red-White game because of a groin-area injury, and Kaiser both still need to get bigger and stronger. Almanzar was listed at 250 pounds on the spring roster, and Kaiser was listed at 240, hardly the size to hold up against Big 12 competition.

Sophomore Tom Milius, a walk-on from Lincoln, Neb., is the only other letterman at tackle. Milius also missed the Red-White game because of injury, as did Wiltz and 6-foot-5, 290-pound junior

Jason McCullough, a transfer from Miami (Fla.) who won't be eligible until the 1998 season.

Peter willingly accepts his role as a leader on defense, like his brother Christian did on Nebraska's back-to-back national championship teams. "It's important. I mean, this is it, do or die now. I've got to get it done," Jason said. "I'm ready to take that leadership role. This has got to be my best year." ■



Harry Lentz, Jr.

Defensive Tackle

nosetackle is Jason Wiltz, one of two juniors among the top eight tackles on the pre-spring depth chart, and the most experienced after Peter. Glen Matthews, a junior college All-American at North Dakota State College of Science, is the other junior, with sophomores Steve Warren, Brandon Drum and Derek Allen and redshirted freshmen Luis Almanzar and Loran Kaiser.

Going into the spring, McBride planned on the 6-foot-3, 300-pound Matthews joining Warren at nosetackle, with Wiltz playing both tackle positions. Halfway through the spring, however, Matthews was hit by a car in an apartment complex parking lot. Following the accident, he suffered light-headedness and some short-term memory loss. As a result, he missed the remainder of spring practice.

As a new player, Matthews need-

NT outlook

returning

Jason Wiltz (6-3, 285, Jr.)
Steve Warren (6-3, 275, So.)
Brandon Drum (6-3, 260, So.)
Glen Matthews (6-3, 300, Jr.)
Tom Milius (6-3, 270, So.)

lost

Jeff Ogard

DT outlook

returning

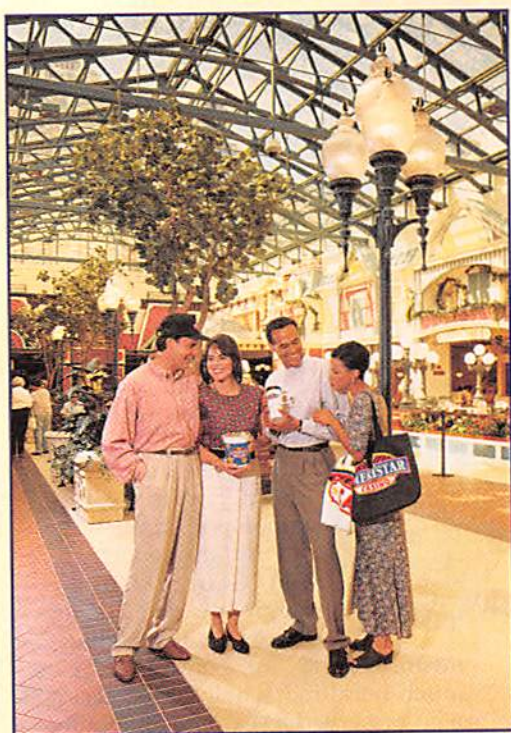
Jason Peter (6-5, 285, Sr.)
Derek Allen (6-3, 280, So.)
Luis Almanzar (6-3, 250, Fr.)
Loran Kaiser (6-5, 240, Fr.)

lost

Scott Saltzman

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Nebbraska went through its third major scrimmage of the spring on the first day of the NFL draft. So Grant Wistrom was a mandatory subject for post-scrimmage media interviews.

His decision to remain at Nebraska for his senior season, rather than submit his name for the draft, was the obvious and unavoidable angle for the day's news. Wistrom patiently repeated answers to the same questions. He would finish with one reporter and reach down to pick up his helmet and shoulder pads, only to be approached by another.

The Cornhuskers' All-America rush end is never too rushed to accommodate a reasonable request, or even one that is not.

"Oh yeah, I mean, I know I made the right decision," he said one more time. "I've never second-guessed that. You look at the guys getting picked and you wonder where you'd fall among them, sure. But as far as ever doubting my decision or anything like that? No... I mean, I couldn't be any happier here."

Neither can Nebraska fans, who will be entertained by Wistrom for one more season. He enjoys a unique popularity, one that transcends what he is capable of doing on a football field — which, of course, is considerable. "You want to keep a great player in the system," said defensive tackle Jason Peter, his friend and roommate.

"We're really fortunate that he's back. Grant's obviously one of the best players in the country, no question. He's also a senior and a leader. Guys look up to him. That's something you need."

Wistrom has nothing to prove, really, by playing another season at Nebraska. He has already established himself among the best ever to play his position. Rush end is regularly lumped together with outside linebackers and defensive ends, even though there are significant differences.

Having acknowledged that, however, Wistrom has earned a place with the Cornhuskers' best, among

them Trev Alberts, Broderick Thomas and Travis Hill, as well as his running mate the past two seasons, Jared Tomich, a second-round draft pick of the NFL's New Orleans Saints.

Wistrom's ability is such that "he's got to be aware people are going to scheme against him," said

going to have to plan for. People will go in with a plan against him, a plan to try to stop him."

Wistrom can expect some help from junior Chad Kelsay on that count. Kelsay stepped up in the spring and replaced Tomich. "People will start scheming against Chad some, too," Barnes said. "Of

course, you can't scheme against both of them. You run out of people, and you run out of schemes."

Rush end has been a showcase position at Nebraska the last two seasons, with Wistrom and Tomich as starters and

Kelsay and junior Mike Rucker among the backups. Even though Tomich will be missed, the position remains among Nebraska's deepest and most athletically gifted.

Rucker, whose athletic ability is unquestioned, moved to the left side in the spring, joining Kelsay, with junior Travis Toline, sophomore Aaron Wills and redshirted freshman George Guidry providing depth and reason for future opti-

mism. Guidry, for example, was a much-heralded scholarship recruit who preserved a season of eligibility by redshirting, even though he might have played right away.

Guidry is a good fit at the high-profile position. "He's very explosive," said Barnes. "He just has to get reps this fall in recognizing things so he can react to them a little quicker. That's going to be his biggest thing... being able to recognize things so his athleticism can take over."

"He's a very good athlete. He's going to be a very good player."

Wills might be, too, if he continues to improve after two years at tight end.

"Aaron's an aggressive kid," Barnes said. "He's going to attack you, and he's going to fight you tooth-and-nail. You can see that. Some guys are aggressive, and some guys are passive. Aaron's the kind of guy who, if he's going the wrong way, he's going 100 miles per hour. So you automatically say: 'Well, this guy may not always know where he's going, but he's going there in a hurry.'" ■

Rush End

Doug DeVoe



Wistrom plans to carry a little more weight this season, as he moves toward NFL physical maturity, which will determine the position he plays at the next level.

Nelson Barnes, who has replaced Tony Samuel as rush ends coach. "So Grant's really got to do a good job of studying (video)tape and having an idea of what kind of scheme and what kind of double-teams he is

LR outlook

returning

Chad Kelsay (6-3, 235, Jr.)
Mike Rucker (6-6, 250, Jr.)
Brandon Mooberry (6-5, 230, Fr.)
George Guidry (6-3, 225, Fr.)

lost

Jared Tomich

RR outlook

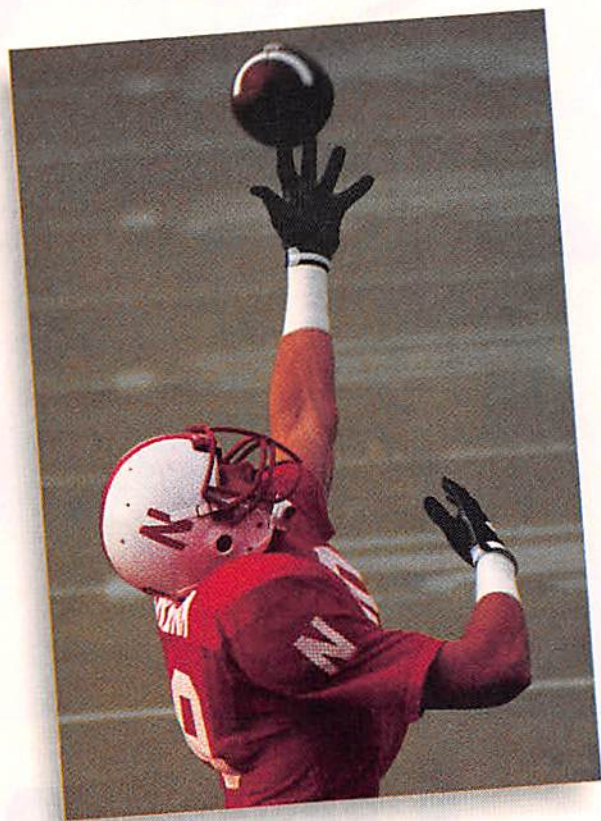
returning

Grant Wistrom (6-5, 250, Sr.)
Travis Toline (6-3, 235, Jr.)
Kareem Sears (6-2, 245, So.)
Aaron Wills (6-2, 250, So.)

lost

None

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Jon Waller

Jay Foreman is big enough to hold his own this fall. Not that he couldn't last season. But an extra 10 pounds of lean muscle mass will serve him well as Nebraska's middle linebacker.

"I'm happy with this weight," said the junior from Eden Prairie, Minn.

"This weight" is 235 pounds. "Last year, I was probably 225, and I couldn't really 'drop the anchor,' if there were two people on me," said the 6-foot-1 Foreman. "At this weight, I have the size, strength and speed to accomplish all the stuff I need to. Right now, I really don't want to weigh any more."

"Maybe by my senior year."

Foreman might gain a pound or two by next season, according to Cornhusker linebackers coach Craig Bohl. But he's certainly big enough, and experienced enough, for the position.

A season's experience alternating with Jon Hesse, a seventh-round draft pick of the NFL's Jacksonville Jaguars, has made Foreman more

comfortable in the middle, after starting every game at strongside linebacker as a redshirted freshman two years ago. The middle takes some getting used to.

"Physically, obviously, I think Jay's just much more explosive and he can ward off blockers better," said Bohl. "I think he's become more

"Overall, we lost a ton of experience from last year, and the last two years."

Craig Bohl
Linebackers Coach

adapted inside, as far as seeing things. We always felt he was a very instinctive player, which you have to be at the 'MIKE' (middle linebacker) position."

Foreman, who isn't listed as a returning starter even though he's about the same as one, doesn't just sense the responsibility, he eagerly accepts it. "I like the leadership part," he said.

"The middle linebacker is kind of like the quarterback on defense."

Linebacking remains something of a question mark, given the fact that all three starters will be new (with an asterisk by Foreman's name, of course). "Overall, we lost a ton of experience from last year, and the last two years," said Bohl. "But I think we have some good young talent. They're eager to learn. They have ability. And as the year goes

Although he's not listed as a returning starter, junior middle linebacker Jay Foreman has played in every big game the Huskers have been in during his career.

along, we're going to find they'll get better and better."

Weakside linebacker Octavious McFarlin, who backed up Mike Minter at rover most of last season, is the only senior among the top nine linebackers, five of whom are sophomores or younger.

Brian Shaw, one of the sophomores, emerged from spring practice as the No. 1 strongside linebacker, with Tony Ortiz, another sophomore, as the top back-up. Both are very athletic. "The thing there is experience, not so much (lack of) physical ability," said Coach Tom Osborne.

Shaw, who walked on from tiny Deweese, Neb., played in every game last season. He was involved in 22 tackles, including 1.5 sacks. He recovered a fumble, and he had four quarterback hurries.

Shaw's play in the spring alleviated some of the concern about losing Jamel Williams. He's "one guy I'm really pleased with, who I feel better about," defensive coordinator Charlie McBride said. "He's more physical than he was last fall. Craig's doing a good job with those young guys."

Shaw was more aggressive in the spring, Bohl said. "I think that's true. I think a lot of that comes down to, he has a better understanding of what he's doing, and when you understand what you're doing, you have confidence in what you do. And then, all of a sudden, you're more aggressive."

"Another thing, too, Brian knows that: 'Hey, I'm no longer a young guy. It's my time to step to the forefront, start taking the bull by the horns and become a dominant player.' He's doing that."

McFarlin is joined at weakside linebacker by junior Eric Johnson, who had to sit out a year following high school because he didn't meet NCAA freshman eligibility requirements.

Last season was Johnson's first at

A strong showing in the spring by sophomore Brian Shaw (46) has helped alleviate the concern that followed the departure of Jamel Williams.

SAM outlook

returning

Brian Shaw (6-0, 215, So.)
Tony Ortiz (6-0, 210, So.)
Quint Hogrefe (5-11, 210, Jr.)

lost

Jamel Williams

MIKE outlook

returning

Jay Foreman (6-1, 235, Jr.)
Ben Buettenback (5-11, 210, So.)
Carlos Polk (6-3, 225, Fr.)

lost

Jon Hesse

WILL outlook

returning

Octavious McFarlin (5-11, 195, Sr.)
Eric Johnson (6-0, 205, Jr.)
Josh Kohl (6-1, 215, So.)
Julius Jackson (6-0, 225, So.)

lost

Ryan Terwilliger
Terrell Farley

the collegiate level, and his adjustment was further complicated by his being moved to weakside linebacker from defensive back. "It's really hard for a guy who's been playing safety to move up with all that traffic," said McBride. "He's doing a better job of tackling."

Johnson has been compared to former Cornhusker weakside linebacker Terrell Farley in athletic ability. "He's a good blitzing, with great speed. Hopefully, he'll be one of those guys who makes plays on the other side of the field. He's a guy we were hoping would improve," McBride said.

One of the biggest surprises of the spring was sophomore walk-on Ben Buettenback at middle linebacker. The 5-foot-11, 210-pound Buettenback lacks the size but not the heart to play the position. Rush end Grant Wistrom probably summed it up best, telling the Lincoln, Neb., *Journal Star*: "He's one of the smallest guys, but he's the most intense and has more guts than a lot of guys."

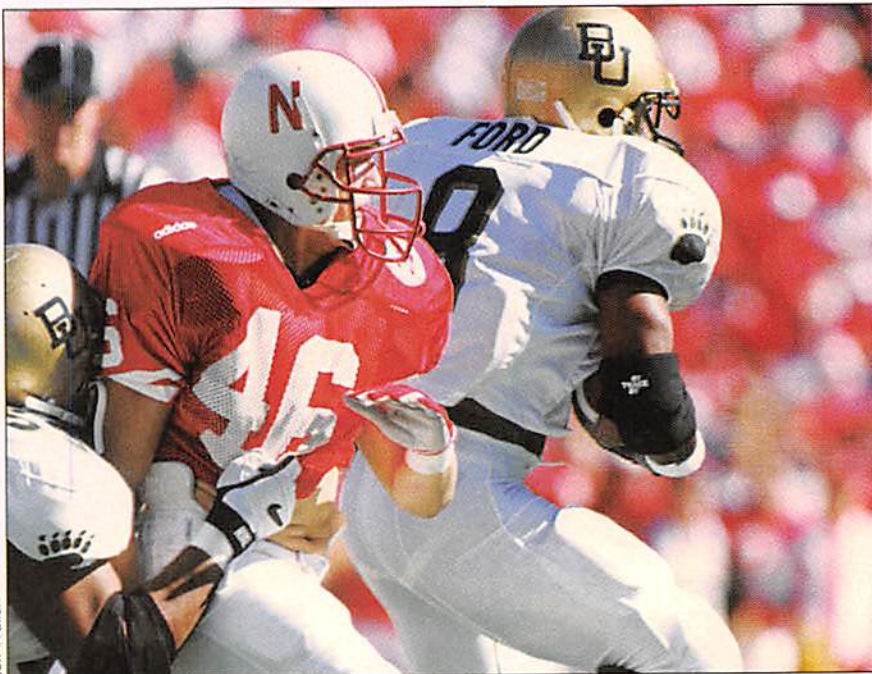
The play of Buettenback and red-shirted freshman Carlos Polk in the spring allowed the coaches to move sophomore Julius Jackson from middle linebacker to the weakside. "We feel like he's going to develop into a good blitzing," Bohl said of Jackson. "He's very strong and physical."

Similar qualities enabled the 6-foot-3, 245-pound Polk to work his way up the depth chart and into the picture at middle linebacker during the spring. He wasn't included on the pre-spring chart.

Because of his size and strength, Polk is well-suited to play "bubble" linebacker, as Hesse and Doug Colman did before him. A "bubble" linebacker "has the ability to step up over an offensive lineman and neutralize an offensive guard . . . have those kind of instincts," said Bohl. "Carlos has got size. He's got good vision. He's got long arms. So he can play up close to the line of scrimmage."

Polk, like Buettenback, has the physical ability to complement Foreman.

"I'm pleased with the three middle linebackers," McBride said. ■



Jon Waller

T rue freshman? Cornerback? Last name Brown?

You must be Ralph...

"A lot of people called me 'Ralph,'" Mike Brown said.

"That's understandable. We have the same last name, and we played the same position.

So once they heard the 'Brown,' they automatically thought I was Ralph. But that was no problem."

Now that they've both spent a season at Nebraska, there won't be any mistaking one for the other. And in case that's not enough, the young defensive backs will be playing different positions.

Ralph Brown, the Associated Press Big 12 Defensive Newcomer of the Year, will again play cornerback, the position at which he started every game last season. But Mike Brown has moved to rover, though not, of course, to alleviate the confu-

Mike Brown picked his spots at corner last year, but was excited to hear he was switching to rover, the position he was originally recruited to play.

sion. "They recruited me as a safety," Mike said.

"I would have been practicing at safety last year. But the coaches didn't know, really, whether they would have enough cornerbacks... or (what would happen) if someone had an injury."

So Mike Brown was asked to move to cornerback, for one season. He readily agreed.

"I had to forego my redshirt

year," he said. "So that was fine by me."

While Ralph Brown was drawing the attention that came with being the first true freshman position player to start a Cornhusker opening game since World War II, Mike Brown was backing up Michael Booker and Mike Fullman at left cornerback and contributing on the kicking teams.

Mike played in every game but

one. Against Colorado State, he was credited with 12 tackles. He broke up one pass and intercepted one against Kansas. He returned the interception 44 yards, evidence of his having played running back on offense at Saguaro High School in Scottsdale, Ariz.

He rushed for 2,036 yards and scored 31 touchdowns as a senior, to earn the Whizzer White Award as the state's best prep running back.

Despite impressive statistics, he never seriously considered playing running back in college, however. "I was just a high school running back," he said.

Mike also won the Tyrone Byrd Award as the state's best prep defensive back as a senior — Byrd, of course, was an all-conference safety and four-year letterman at Nebraska from 1989 through 1992. It was the defense in Brown's background that interested the Cornhuskers.

Compared to his stellar high school career, Mike Brown labored in relative anonymity in his first collegiate season... except, of course,

Secondary

Jon Waller



when he was mistaken for Ralph.

In addition to the other similarities, Mike showed remarkable mental maturity for a true freshman, according to defensive backs coach George Darlington. More than once Darlington commented how precocious the two Browns were, and how well they understood Nebraska's defense.

That was a result of a summer's worth of preparation, Mike said. "The coaches, when they recruited us, asked if we would come in the summer. They said it would be to our advantage, and to the team's advantage, if we came in and learned what we needed to learn. That wasn't a problem for me.

"I already wanted to come in, learn the system and do what I could to help the team."

Spending the summer in Lincoln wasn't mandatory, of course. And the workouts couldn't be supervised by the coaching staff. But players such as Booker and Fullman were like coaches.

"Those guys, they made the transition easy for us, especially Ralph and me," said Mike. "They became our friends and taught us the defenses. They made sure we knew what we were doing. I really respect those guys for that. They could have said: 'Aw, he's a freshman. Just forget about him.' But they brought us in and taught us what we should know. They helped us improve. They taught us the coverages."

By the time Darlington began testing the defensive backs on coverage responsibilities, "we knew them pretty well because we had been here in the summer," Mike said. "We had a couple of months before we took the first test. I think doing well on the tests was a result of those older guys teaching us."

In the back of his mind, Mike knew he would eventually end up playing rover — strong safety. That was apparent almost from the beginning. His recruiting host was even Mike Minter.

The coaches began talking about moving him to rover at the end of last season. After the Orange Bowl game, "they told me I probably would move," Mike Brown said. "I was excited."

When the move finally became official, "I was



Jon Waller

The only returning starter in the secondary, Ralph Brown showed considerable poise last year as teams attempted to pick on the true freshman.

extremely happy," he said. "Safety was the position I came here to play. I feel more comfortable at safety than I did at cornerback."

Moving meant learning different responsibilities. So, as he had done during the summer, Mike set about preparing himself to play rover in the spring. He was a regular in the videotape room during winter conditioning, and "we have our playbooks all the time, so I could look at it. During the winter, I did as much of the mental part as I could, so I'd have a little bit of knowledge coming in," he said.

He applied that knowledge in spring practice and finished as he began — as the No. 1 rover.

The differences between cornerback and rover are significant. But Brown adjusted well, and quickly. "I just went out every day and gave it the best I had," he said. "I had a lot to learn, that's for sure."

Darlington assumed Brown would adapt to his new position. And that assumption was justified. In fact, Darlington's assumptions were correct across the board. Each of the players in the secondary who went into the spring at No. 1 on the depth chart held their positions throughout.

Senior Leslie Dennis and sophomore Jerome Peterson were listed either/or at left cornerback. Technically, Peterson won the job, not only because of his play but also because the status of Dennis remains in doubt. Because of chronic knee problems, Dennis might not play his final season at Nebraska.

There was little doubt, if any, that senior Eric Warfield would hold the No. 1 free safety position in the spring, and, of course, Ralph Brown is the returning starter at right cornerback.

"We had a pretty good spring. All the kids as a group were good hitters. The improvement of Jerome Peterson really helps, and the addition of Joe Walker makes it much brighter," said Darlington. ■

LGB outlook

returning

Leslie Dennis (5-9, 175, Sr.)
Jerome Peterson (5-7, 185, So.)
Demond Finister (6-0, 175, Fr.)
Joe Walker (5-11, 185, Fr.)

lost

Michael Booker
Mike Fullman
Chad Blahak

FS outlook

returning

Eric Warfield (6-0, 195, Sr.)
Clint Finley (6-1, 195, Fr.)
Eric Walther (6-0, 170, Jr.)

lost

Eric Stokes

ROV outlook

returning

Mike Brown (6-0, 200, So.)
Gregg List (6-0, 195, So.)
Jason Benes (5-11, 185, Sr.)
George Dittrick (6-1, 190, Fr.)

lost

Mike Minter
Mike Roberts

RCB outlook

returning

Ralph Brown (5-11, 180, So.)
Josh Anderson (5-8, 170, Fr.)

lost

David Alderman

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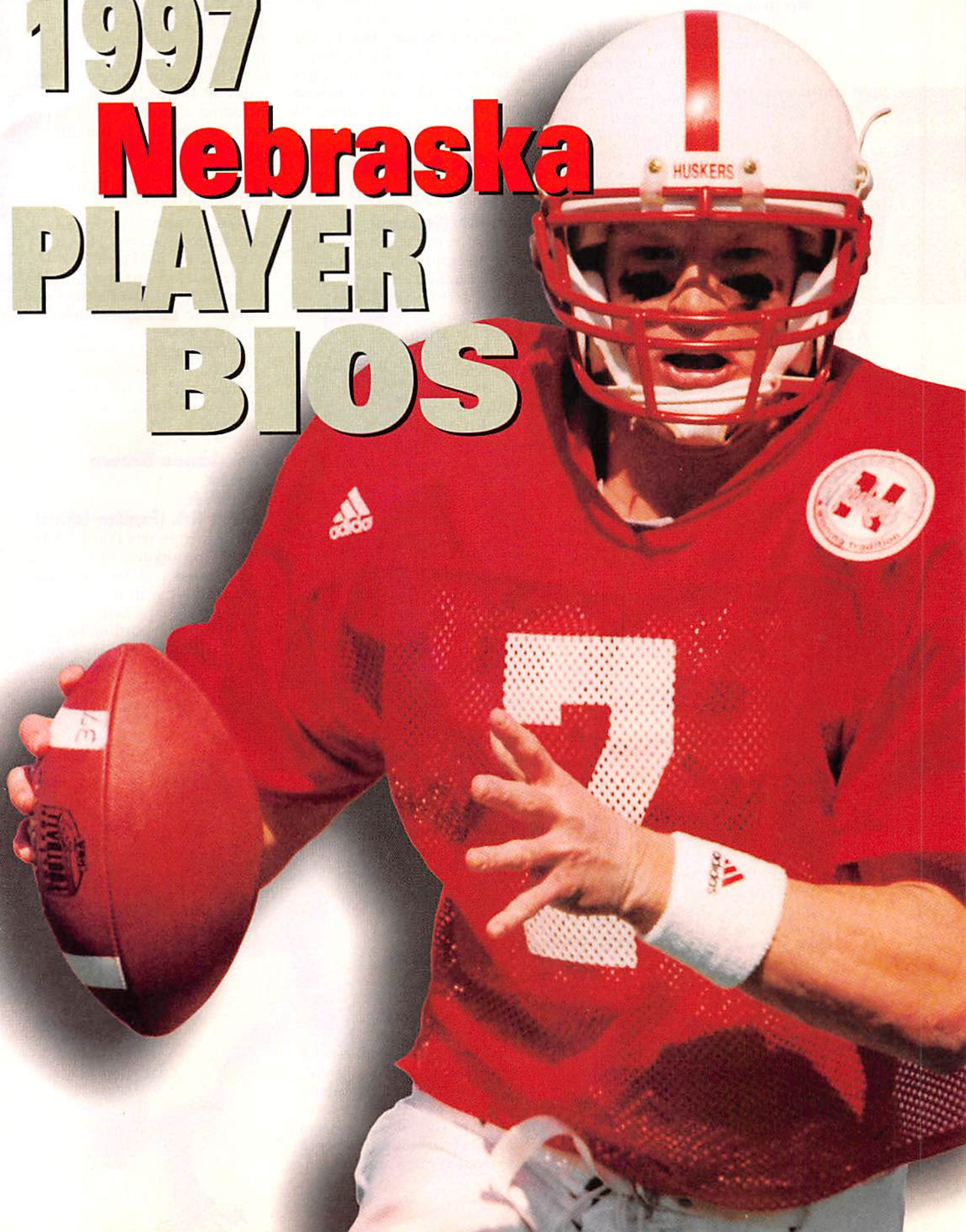
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#38 Dan Alexander
I-Back/Fullback
6-1, 240, Fr.
Wentzville, Mo.

Alexander was among the most talked-about newcomers in the spring, drawing attention to himself by scoring third-best on the performance index in post-winter conditioning tests, and running the 40 in 4.52 seconds, the sixth-fastest time in testing. He also was voted NU's Lifter of the Year.

This spring, he alternated at I-back and fullback, and at one point, appeared to be settling in at fullback. But coach Tom

Osborne said after the Spring Game that Alexander probably would be an I-back if a decision were to be made at that point. "He's obviously very powerful," Osborne said. "But he has speed, and he has just enough movement to make you miss a little bit. He's an amazing athlete for his size."

A knee injury sustained in the spring game will keep him sidelined until at least September.

Frank Solich: "Dan started off spring practice learning both spots (I-back and fullback). He's the kind of guy who could play at either position. Down the road, I'd like to see him play both."

#95 Derek Allen
Defensive Tackle
6-3, 280, Soph.
Russellville, Ark.

Allen played in only five games last season, but showed potential. Two of his five total tackles were quarterback sacks, for losses of 9 yards. He also was credited with two quarterback hurries.

Allen's background is solid. He was the 1994 Arkansas high school Defensive Player of the Year, following a senior season in which he had eight quarterback sacks and 25 quarterback hurries.

Allen and fellow sophomore Brandon Drum are slated to back

up Jason Peter. Drum's development in the spring was hampered by the fact that he missed the first week while recovering from knee surgery.

Charlie McBride: "Jason Wiltz can play both (tackle) positions. But the younger guys, you don't want to move around. We moved Drum to the tackle position, so it'll be Derek and him."

#70 Eric Anderson
Right Tackle
6-4, 305, Sr.
Lincoln, Neb. (Southeast)

Anderson was a first-team All-Big 12 selection by the conference's coaches.

He had arthroscopic surgery on a shoulder after the Orange Bowl game, and still had difficulty raising his arm above his head during the spring. As a result, the decision was made for Anderson to have more surgery.

He missed the final two weeks of spring practice. The shoulder problem also hampered his work in the weight room. "He's lost a lot of strength," Tom Osborne said after the second major scrimmage of the spring. "He's a great player, but it's made him a lesser player." Anderson should be ready by fall.

Milt Tenopir (on Aaron Taylor and Anderson): "You've got two kids who, when they're both healthy, are third-year starters. Both of those kids would rank up at the top with some of the better players who have played at their positions. Both are very seasoned. Both are very 'moxie' football players. What we're looking for out of them this year is leadership, and we should get it."

#35 Kris Brown
Place-kicker
5-10, 205, Jr.
Southlake, Texas (Carroll)

Brown is being promoted by Nebraska as a candidate for the Lou Groza Award and All-America honors. He was a nominee for the Groza Award last season, when he earned second-team All-Big 12 recognition from both the Associated Press and the con-

ference coaches.

Brown has led the Cornhuskers in scoring in each of his two seasons. He scored 86 points last season, making 12-of-19 field goals and 50-of-51 extra-point kicks. He made three field goals of 40 yards or more, including a career-best of 51 yards in the Big 12 playoff against Texas.

He had a string of 48 consecutive extra-point kicks made.

Dan Young: "Kris had another good spring. He's a very accurate field goal kicker. He started out the first scrimmage (of the spring) and missed two field goals. But after that he was very consistent. His kickoffs are good. Sometimes, he'll hit a low line-drive. But for the most part, he can hang 'em, get 'em 3 or 4 yards deep (in the end zone)."

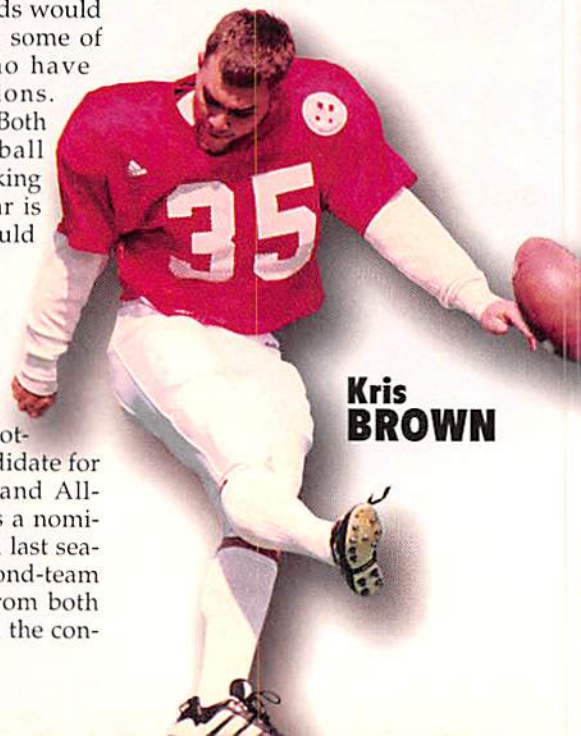
#14 Lance Brown
Wingback
5-11, 190, Jr.
Papillion, Neb. (Papillion-LaVista)

Brown is an emotional leader. "There's no shyness in me, none at all," he has said. He could hold his own with such notable trash talkers on defense last season as Terrell Farley, according to quarterback Scott Frost. "He's got a lot of spirit," Frost said of Brown. "He gets us fired up."

Brown's exuberance has manifested itself in the backflips he has done on the sideline in cele-



Dan ALEXANDER



Kris BROWN



#22 Ralph Brown
Cornerback
5-11, 180, Soph.
Hacienda Heights, Calif. (Bishop Amat)

Brown, the first true freshman position player to start a season-opening game for the Cornhuskers since at least World War II, is the only returning starter in the secondary. He started every game and finished with 28 tackles, including 15 solos. Even more impressive, however, were 12 pass breakups, the second-highest total in Nebraska history, and four pass interceptions, one of which he returned 83 yards for a touchdown against Oklahoma. He was a first-team Freshman All-American according to *The Sporting News* and the Associated Press Big 12 Defensive Newcomer of the Year.

George Darlington: "Ralph showed excellent improvement over a very fine freshman season. He really did an outstanding job in the spring. The experience factor is there with him."

#39 Ben Buettenback
Middle Linebacker
5-11, 210, Soph.
Hastings, Neb.

Just about every season, a walk-on emerges from virtual obscurity to make a significant contribution. Buettenback could be such a player this season. He saw only limited action in six games last season, assisting on two tackles and breaking up a pass, but he played well in the spring.

He plays bigger than he is. He's looking to follow in the footsteps of another graduate of Hastings High School who came to Nebraska on his own and eventually excelled — Joel Wilks, a starting offensive guard in the Cornhuskers' "Pipeline" on the 1994 national championship team.

Craig Bohl: "Ben's a guy who just continues to make plays. He's somebody that people would say: 'He's too small or too slow.' But he's got tremendous instincts and very good quickness."



#90 Tim Carpenter
Tight End
6-3, 255, Sr.
Columbus, Neb.

The converted full-back has been a study in determination. He missed only two games as a sophomore, despite undergoing arthroscopic knee surgery during the season. Then he played every game last season, despite undergoing reconstructive surgery on his right knee in the spring of 1996.

He was on crutches for two months after the surgery and wasn't expected to be healthy enough to play last season until the Arizona State game, at the earliest. Yet he played extensively in the opener against Michigan State, one of the two games he didn't start a year ago. The other was at Iowa State.

Carpenter has caught only two passes during his Cornhusker career, neither last season. But his lack of receptions has been more a result of the injury problems than a lack of ability.

Ron Brown: "Tim had to gut it out through last season because of the injury, and he did. He's really made a nice recovery. It hampered his running, but he was a terrific blocker at the point of attack."

#6 Kenny Cheatham
Split End
6-4, 210, Jr.
Phoenix, Ariz. (South Mountain)

This could be a breakout season for Cheatham, who has size, speed and enough athletic ability that there was talk he might contact Danny Nee about trying out for the Cornhusker basketball team. He started once last season, against Arizona State when Nebraska opened with double wideouts.

He caught seven passes for 105 yards and one touchdown, a 30-yarder

Tim CARPENTER



Jon Waller (top and bottom)



Ralph BROWN

brating touchdowns — he has scored two during his career, including one last season.

Brown is extremely athletic, with a 37-6 vertical jump and 4.55 speed in the 40-yard dash.

Ron Brown: "Lance is a guy who can play split end or wing-back. He's the most versatile receiver we have in terms of doing a lot of things."

#21 Mike Brown
Rover
6-0, 200, Soph.
Scottsdale, Ariz. (Saguaro)

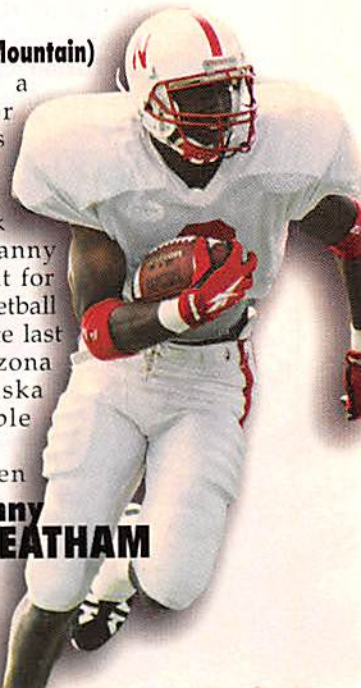
Brown, the first athlete in 10 years to earn Arizona high school Player of the Year honors for both offense and defense as a senior, was moved from cornerback to rover in the spring. The transition went smoothly.

He played in every game except against Colorado State last season, making 12 tackles, breaking up a pass and intercepting a pass, which he returned 44 yards against Kansas.

Like cornerback Ralph Brown (no relation), Mike played as a true freshman, evidence not only of his athletic ability but also of his football savvy. He is a quick study.

George Darlington: "Mike did a very good job at rover (in the spring). We recruited him to play there. Our lack of depth was the only reason he played cornerback. He's an excellent tackler and a very smart player."

Kenny CHEATHAM



from Matt Turman to complete the scoring in the Cornhuskers' 55-14 opening-game victory against Michigan State. He also completed the scoring in the Oklahoma game, returning a kickoff 85 yards for a touchdown.

Ron Brown: "With Kenny, it's just a matter of what he wants to do, if he makes up his mind. God has given him lots of ability. He's a big, strong guy. He's a very smart guy. He was really aggressive in the spring. He went after people. He could be a vicious blocker because he's such a powerful guy."

#9 Monte Christo
Quarterback
6-0, 195, Jr.
Kearney, Neb.

Christo, who walked on, has battled through some hard luck during his brief career. He was pulled out of a redshirt year as a freshman in 1994 after Tommie Frazier was sidelined by a blood-clot problem.

He missed spring practice in 1995 after undergoing back surgery, and he suffered a season-ending knee injury on the first day of fall camp in 1995. He made appearances in five games last season, rushing three times for 35 yards. His toughness is unquestioned. He took a vicious hit from linebacker Julius Jackson in the third major scrimmage of the spring and was ready to go the next Monday.

Turner Gill: "The main thing we've concentrated on is his passing ability, which he has improved. He's very, very good on the option game. He knows our offense very well. He's an intelligent young man. It's just a matter of him putting it all together as far as the passing game."

Jeff CLAUSEN

#68 Jeff Clausen
Tackle
6-6, 305, Soph.
Dixon, Ill.

Clausen, a *USA Today* high school All-American, had arthroscopic surgery on his left kneecap after the 1996 Fiesta Bowl game. In February, he underwent surgery to repair pins that had worked loose in his knee, and he missed all of spring practice. "We had hoped he'd be out," Tom Osborne said.

Clausen has tremendous potential, according to the coaches... if he can just get healthy.

Milt Tenopir: "Jeff's got a tremendous attitude."

#2 Leslie Dennis
Cornerback
5-9, 175, Sr.
Bradenton, Fla. (Southeast)

Dennis started the first game of his collegiate career, as a red-shirted freshman. He replaced Tyrone Williams, who was suspended, at cornerback for the 1994 opener against West Virginia in the Kickoff Classic. Dennis played in every game the remainder of the season as Williams' backup.

It has been downhill for Dennis since then because of chronic knee problems. He played in nine games as Williams' backup in 1995 and in only two games last season. His status for the fall is in serious doubt.

George Darlington: "He's still troubled with knee problems. No question he can run straight ahead, with anyone. But his knees inhibit his ability to change directions."

#2 J.R. Edwards
Split End
6-2, 195, Soph.
Lincoln, Neb. (Southeast)

Edwards was good enough to play as a true freshman. The problem is, he didn't play much before suffering a severe hamstring pull that ended his first collegiate season. He petitioned for a hardship ruling, but it

doesn't appear that the additional season of eligibility will be granted.

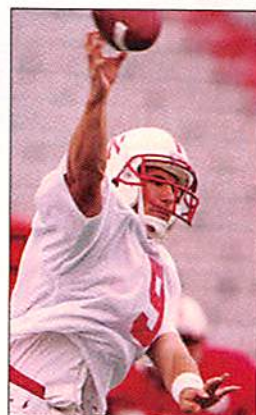
Edwards ran the fastest 40-yard dash in post-winter conditioning, a remarkable 4.39 seconds. He also is very explosive off the line of scrimmage, as indicated by his 1.52 at 10 yards.

He caught one pass last season, in the Michigan State game, for a 10-yard gain.

Ron Brown: "J.R. has excellent ability. He's a tremendous worker in terms of tenacity. He wants to compete. He's a very competitive person, and a very powerful guy."

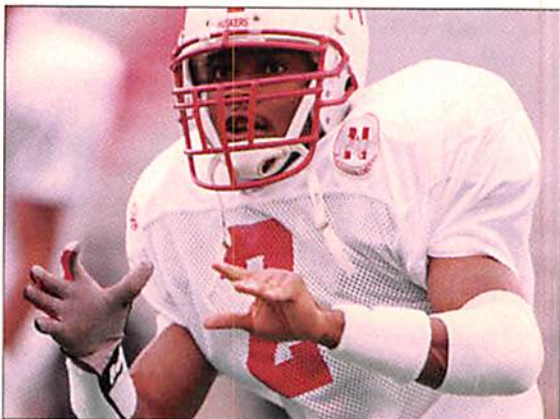
#4 DeAngelo Evans
I-Back
5-9, 210, Soph.
Wichita, Kan. (Collegiate)

Evans, like Ahman Green before him, had a remarkable season as a true freshman, particularly in light of the fact that an



Jon Waller

Monte CHRISTO



Jon Waller

Leslie DENNIS

injury in the groin and pelvic area kept him from being at his best. He missed most of winter conditioning and all of spring practice to give the injury time to heal.

Evans showed that comparisons to Barry Sanders weren't misplaced, rushing for 776 yards and 14 touchdowns. The rushing yardage was third-best in Cornhusker history for a freshman. The 14 touchdowns were the best ever by a freshman. He was at his best in big games: 168 yards and two TDs against Kansas State, 130 yards and three TDs against Texas, and 123 yards and one TD against Colorado.

Frank Solich: "Even though DeAngelo missed spring ball because of the injury... it'll be healed up by this summer. We hope he has a great summer of



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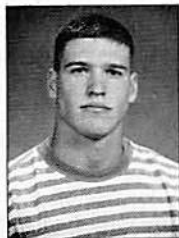
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conditioning so he's ready to go in the fall. He's a smart player, so he won't have trouble from the fact that he missed spring ball."

#19 Clint Finley

Free Safety
6-1, 195, Fr.
Cuero, Texas

Finley, who is coming off a redshirt season, was the only quarterback among the scholarship recruits in 1996. He was quickly moved to the secondary because of the need there, however.



His father, Mickey, was his high school football coach. As a senior, he rushed for 834 yards and passed for 1,789 yards and 20 touchdowns. He also excelled in track and field as a hurdler, with a personal best of 13.55 in the 110-meter hurdles.

He has adapted well to the secondary and could end up at either safety position.

George Darlington: "Clint's probably the most devastating tackler we have in the secondary. He'll compete very strongly for a starting position, even though he's behind (Eric) Warfield right now."

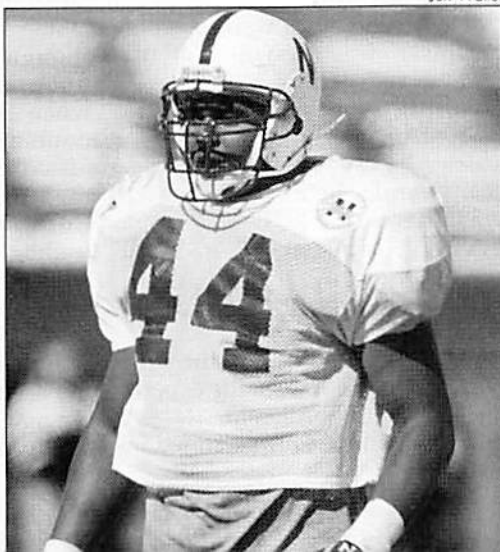
#44 Jay Foreman

Middle Linebacker
6-1, 230, Jr.
Eden Prairie, Minn.

Nebraska's starting middle linebacker will again be No. 44. Foreman has that number now, after it became available when Jon Hesse completed his eligibility. Foreman traded the No. 56 he wore his first two seasons to get No. 44, which his father, Chuck, wore with the Minnesota Vikings.

Foreman alternated with Hesse in the middle last season after starting every game at strongside linebacker as a redshirted freshman in 1995. He was credited with 43 tackles, including 22 unassisted, and had two interceptions — the first set up a touchdown against Oklahoma, and

Jay FOREMAN



the second he returned 21 yards for the Cornhuskers' first touchdown in the Colorado game.

Ahman GREEN

Craig Bohl: "We've been happy with Jay. He's put on 10 pounds from last year, which has really helped his play. He's very physical, and he's maintained his speed, maybe gotten a half-step faster."

#7 Scott Frost

Quarterback
6-3, 215, Sr.
Wood River, Neb.

By any reasonable standard, Frost had an exceptional first season at Nebraska, accounting for 22 touchdowns, nine rushing and 13 passing. He completed 104-of-200 passes (52 percent) for 1,440 yards, with only three interceptions to rank 32nd nationally in passing efficiency.

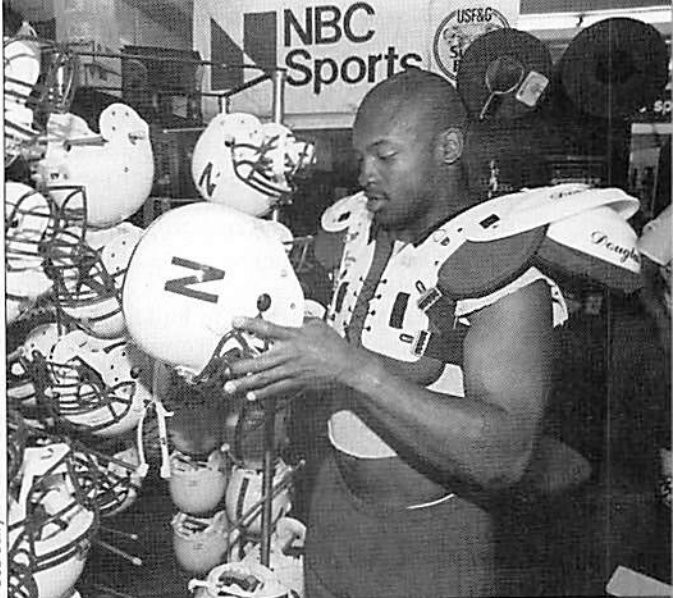


His passing yardage was the eighth-best single-season total in Cornhusker history, and put him at No. 16 on the career list (which says a good deal about NU's offensive philosophy).

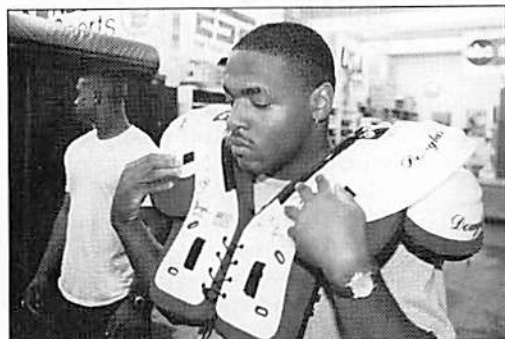
Frost underwent knee surgery to remove the bursa sac, and arthroscopic surgery to remove a bone chip from his elbow after the Orange Bowl, in which he completed 11-of-22 passes for 136 yards and rushed for 62 yards and two touchdowns on nine carries. He was at full-speed in the spring.

Turner Gill: "With Scott, the main thing I'm looking

Jon Waller



Bob Berry



Bob Berry

DeAngelo EVANS

for is being more consistent in everything we do, the passing aspect, the option game, all those things. He's done a little better, trying to get a little more aggressive, more assertive . . . not anything specifically, but all things, just his overall play."

#30 Ahman Green

I-Back
6-0, 212, Jr.
Omaha, Neb. (Central)

Green has trimmed down from the 226 pounds at which he reported last fall, and has recovered from the injuries that hampered him throughout his second collegiate season. His post-winter conditioning tests provided dramatic evidence of that. He was second on the performance index, second in the 10-yard dash (1.50 seconds) and tied with cornerback Jerome Peterson for the second-best time in the 40-yard dash (4.42 seconds). He also was second in the pro-agility run and the vertical jump.

Despite being slowed by a turf toe and then sidelined by a stress fracture in his left foot, Green showed flashes of his freshman brilliance last season, rushing for

214 yards and one touchdown against Iowa State, and 161 yards and one touchdown against Missouri. If he regains his freshman form, this could be his last season at Nebraska. Even Tom Osborne has acknowledged that possibility.

Frank Solich: "I'm looking for Ahman to have a tremendous season. I think his weight is where he likes it. I think he's in great condition. And when he's that way, when he's got his weight where he wants it and when he's moving well, he's just a great football player."

#9 George Guidry

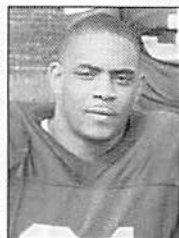
Rush End

6-3, 225, Fr.

Lake Charles, La. (Washington)

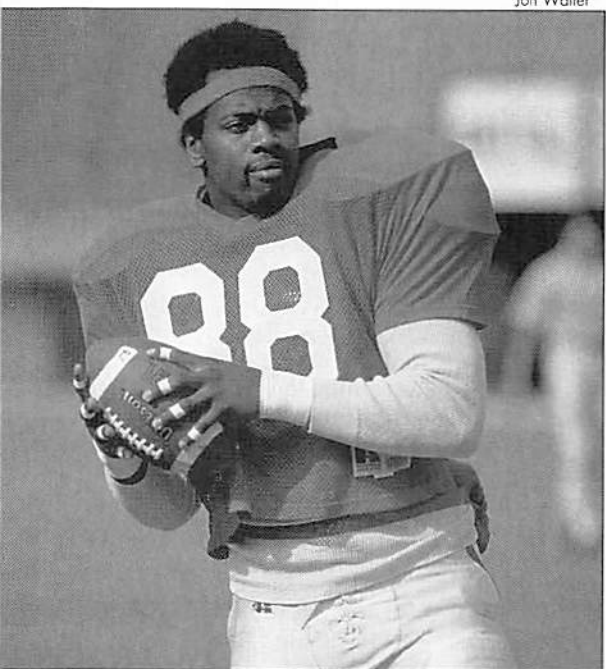
Guidry was a highly regarded scholarship recruit who probably would have played without redshirting had the Cornhuskers not been so well-stocked at rush end a year ago. Given the situation, there was no reason to waste a season of eligibility. His playing time would have been limited.

He was a high school All-America defensive player according to *Bluechip* and the National Recruiting Advisor. He ranked No. 8 on the performance index in post-winter conditioning



Jon Waller

Sheldon JACKSON



tests. He has been timed at 4.63 seconds in the 40-yard dash. He just needs repetition and game experience.

Nelson Barnes: "George is a very raw kid, a very natural talented kid. He has great speed, definitely the fastest guy in our group and probably has the most athleticism... just natural athleticism."

#59 Josh Heskew

Center

6-3, 280, Jr.

Yukon, Okla. (Mustang)

Heskew, who came on strong at the end of last season, missed all of spring practice after suffering a broken bone in a foot while running the pro agility drill in post-winter conditioning tests.

He started the Orange Bowl game and played every offensive down until the final minutes. He was playing well enough to move into the starting lineup sooner, but the coaches were concerned that the chemistry in the line might have been disrupted without sufficient time to make the switch.

Heskew compensates for what he lacks in bulk with strength, leverage and exceptional effort.

Milt Tenopir: "Josh is coming off the injury well. We expect him to step in and be a fine center. He played very well as the season went along last year. He's a tremendous-effort guy."



#62 Matt Hoskinson

Guard/Center

6-1, 280, Sr.

Battle Creek, Neb.

Hoskinson, who walked on at Nebraska, was a "swing" guard last season, meaning he backed up both sides. By season's end, he was alternating every other series at guard. He played a lot in the Orange Bowl game and is "about the only backup (in the line) with experience," Tom Osborne said.

With Josh Heskew sidelined in



the spring, Hoskinson moved to center. The coaches were hesitant to move him because of his value at guard, but they needed someone with experience. Now, he can play all three positions in the middle of the line. He has good explosiveness and has run a 5.14 in the 40-yard dash.

Milt Tenopir: "The injury to (Josh) Heskew allowed us to look at Matt at center. He played well in the spring. We'll use him some at center, but we'll also use him at guard in the fall, too."

#88 Sheldon Jackson

Tight End

6-4, 250, Jr.

Diamond Bar, Calif. (Damien)

Jackson gives the Cornhuskers three starter-quality tight ends. He got two starts last season, in fact. He has made the most of his 10 career receptions, scoring four touchdowns. His strong suit is as a pass receiver. He's still developing as a blocker. You don't play in Nebraska's system if you don't block, particularly at tight end. Jackson has the ability, he just needs to match it with commitment.

Jackson, with his omnipresent stocking cap, ranks among the most personable Cornhuskers.

Ron Brown: "Sheldon's got tremendous fluidity for a tight end. He really runs excellent routes. He was catching the ball very well in the spring. He just needs to be a little bit more solid as a blocker."

#34 Vershan Jackson

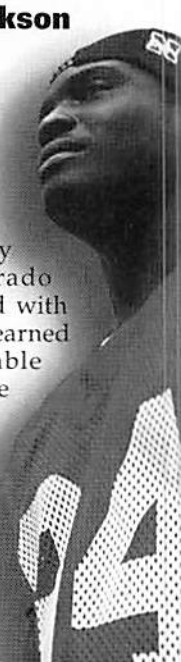
Tight End

6-0, 245, Sr.

Omaha, Neb. (South)

Another converted fullback, Jackson came on strong at the end of last season. Even though he started only once, against Colorado when Nebraska opened with double tight ends, he earned all-conference honorable mention. He was the Cornhuskers' third-leading receiver, with 10 catches for 220 yards and four touchdowns. He also caught a pass for a 9-yard gain in the Orange Bowl game.

Jackson is a solid

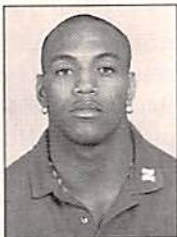


blocker and he's still improving as a receiver. "When I came here, I thought I'd be playing fullback and carrying (the ball) extensively," he said. Jackson's not complaining, however.

Ron Brown: "Vershan has excellent speed, just get-down-the-field with a lot of speed. He's also a very powerful blocker, and he's coming along as a receiver. I think there are still a few things in his game that need to be touched on. But he's made very good progress, particularly in his pass routes."

#1 Eric Johnson
Weakside Linebacker
6-0, 205, Jr.
Phoenix, Ariz. (Alhambra)

Much was expected of Johnson. But last season was his first at the collegiate level, a fact that had a significant effect on his development. He also was moved from cornerback to weakside linebacker the first week of fall camp. He played in only nine games and was credited with 12 tackles.



Johnson has outstanding physical skills. He ran the third-best 40-yard dash time in post-winter conditioning tests — 4.43. He's explosive (1.52 in the 10-yard dash), and he had the sixth-best point total in the performance index. He is a cousin of former Oklahoma quarterback Jamelle Holieway, and he was a junior high teammate of former Cornhusker wingback Abdul Muhammad.

He's enthusiastic and up-beat, both on and off the field.

Craig Bohl:

"He's really gaining a better understanding of our defense. He's got an excellent first step and is a very good blitzer. He's becoming a better tackler."

Vershan JACKSON

#69 Adam Julch
Tackle
6-5, 310, Soph.
Omaha, Neb. (Burke)

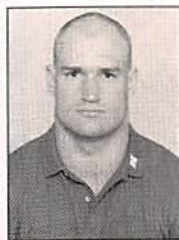
Julch suffered a knee injury the first Friday of spring practice and subsequently had surgery. He was the first in Nebraska's 1995 scholarship recruiting class to make an oral commitment to the Cornhuskers, announcing his intention in September of 1994. He comes from a high school program rich in tradition. Among the other Cornhuskers who have played for Burke coach Larry Jacobsen were: Barney Cotton, Mike Keeler and Andy Keeler. Sophomore rush end Aaron Wills also is a Burke grad.

Adam JULCH

Milt Tenopir (on Jeff Clausen and Julch): "Clausen and Julch both have the right temperament to be overpowering football players. The thing they lack is quickness. There will be times when they'll probably have some problems blocking a quicker guy who's (lined up) wide. But stuff that is at them and firing off the ball, those type of things, they're very good at. They're both very intense."

#57 Chad Kelsay
Rush End
6-3, 235, Jr.
Auburn, Neb.

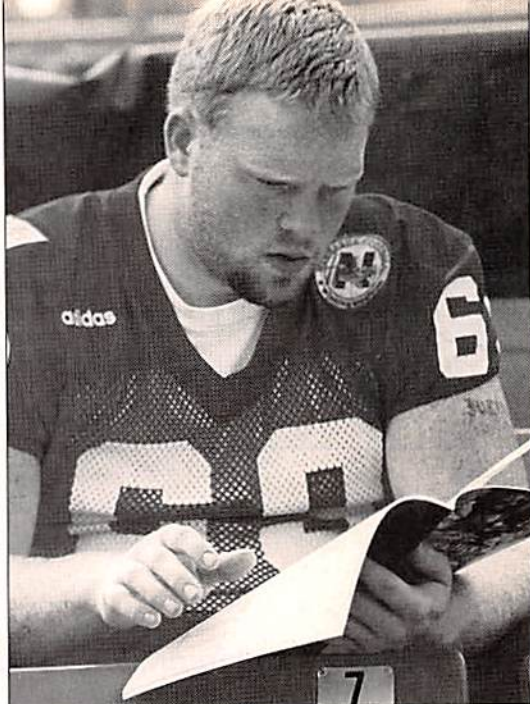
All-American Jared Tomich has completed his eligibility and moved on to the NFL, as a second-round draft pick of the New Orleans Saints.



But there isn't likely to be any drop-off on the left side.

Kelsay, a finalist for Lifter of the Year honors, gained 15 pounds of lean muscle mass during the six weeks of winter conditioning. He's fast and strong. He can squat lift 555 pounds and run the 40-yard dash in 4.85 seconds. "Jared just overpowered a lot of people, where Chad uses his quickness to get the job done," said defensive coordinator Charlie McBride. That's bad news for the opposition.

Nelson Barnes: "Chad's got great quickness off the ball,



J.C. Ridley

great explosion to the ball. He has good instincts, uses his hands fairly well. He's probably not quite as instinctive as Grant (Wistrom), but he's very instinctive. He gets around the ball. He's such a 100-percent player."

#19 Jesse Kosch
Punter
6-0, 185, Sr.
Columbus, Neb. (Scotus)

Kosch, who came to Nebraska as a walk-on, averaged a school-record 44.7 yards per punt last season to rank third in the conference and 11th nationally. He is a second-generation Cornhusker letterman. His father, Bill, played defensive back for Bob Devaney's back-to-back national championship teams.

Jesse KOSCH

Michael Chow

Jesse is an outstanding soccer player and might have pursued that sport. "I've been playing soccer since I was 6 or 7 (years old)," he said. "We got (varsity) soccer my junior year (in high school), but I still went out for track because the football coach was also the track coach. If they'd had a men's soccer team when I came here . . . I probably would have had a better chance to play that right away."



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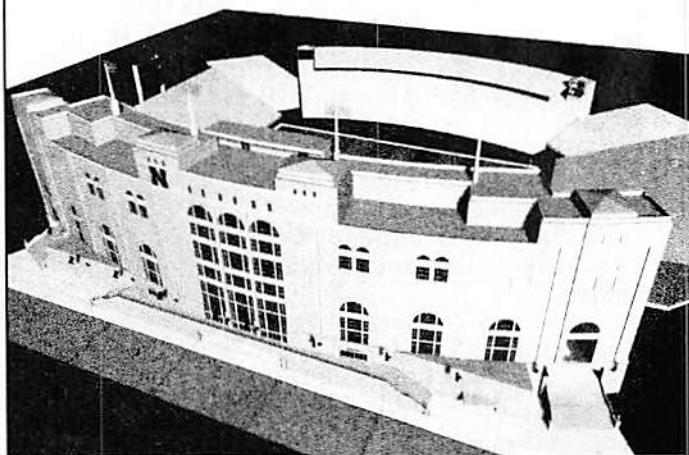
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Dan Young: "Jesse just seems to get better and better every year. When he first came here as a walk-on, we thought he was a good punter, but not somebody who would be where he's at today. He gets his leg into the ball well. I've been really pleased with the progress Jesse has made. In the spring when we charted, I think he averaged about 46 yards (per punt). He's really become a very consistent punter."

#23 Bill LaFleur

Punter
6-0, 205, Jr.
Norfolk, Neb. (Norfolk Catholic)

LaFleur, a walk-on, played quarterback and safety in addition to kicking in high school. He earned all-state honors as a quarterback and punter. He's an excellent student as well as an athlete. He punted twice last season and made the most of his opportunities, averaging 47.5 yards per punt.



Dan Young: "Bill didn't punt quite as well in the spring when we charted, but he kicked pretty well in our scrimmages and in the Spring Game. He's got a strong leg . . . and he hits the golf ball about 300 yards. He's a fine athlete. We hope, if everything goes well, Bill can be our punter next year."

#89 Jeff Lake

Split End
6-4, 210, Sr.
Columbus, Neb. (Lakeview)

Like Kenny Cheatham, Lake has size, speed and athletic ability. He was among the team's best on Boyd Epley's performance index following winter conditioning. He also ran a 4.48 in the 40-yard dash.



As with all walk-ons, he has shown tremendous commitment and dedication. He caught four passes for 101 yards and one touchdown, on a 51-yard pass from Scott Frost against Oklahoma, as a junior. The 51-yarder was the Cornhuskers' longest pass play of

the season.

Lake and Cheatham are regarded as interchangeable as the starter.

Ron Brown: "Jeff is a terrific blocker, a very aggressive, tenacious-type player. He's the most improved receiver I think I've ever coached, from day one until now. He's transformed himself since he came here, with a lot of hard work and dedication. And with an engineering major, that isn't easy."

#40 Billy Legate

Fullback
5-11, 220, Jr.
Elgin, Neb. (Clearwater)

Another walk-on who played eight-man football in high school, Legate made a name for himself on special teams, following in the tradition of such notables as Lance Gray and the Penland brothers, Aaron and Matt. He was so valuable on the kickoff and punt coverage teams, in fact, that he earned mention twice in Tom Osborne's weekly news conferences, after being sidelined by a hamstring pull.

"Where we miss Billy more than anything else is in the kicking game," Osborne said one week, adding: "He's a very capable fullback, too." Legate backed up Brian Schuster and Joel Makovicka.

Frank Solich: "Billy's done a fine job for us. He really helped us out a great deal last year on specialty teams. He'll be that kind of a player again, to really contribute as far as special teams this coming season. He'll also put himself in a position to play some at the fullback spot."

#1 Frankie London

Quarterback
6-0, 175, Soph.
Lake Charles, La. (LaGrange)

London has had to carry the considerable burden of being described by some as "the next Tommie Frazier," after an impressive high school career as a run-pass quarterback. He passed for 1,888 yards and 18 touchdowns and rushed for 800 yards and nine touchdowns as a senior.

Late in his first season at

Nebraska, when he red-shirted, he underwent shoulder surgery and lost 20 pounds, a physical setback. He played sparingly in four games last season. He didn't throw a pass and rushed only three times for 6 yards. He was impressive in Orange Bowl practices, however.

Turner Gill: "Frankie's very talented. He has excellent speed, very good quickness. He throws the ball well and runs the option very well. His main thing is just basically getting repetition and getting the plays down, getting the mental part right. That's just a matter of repetition."

#45 Joel Makovicka

Fullback
5-11, 235, Jr.
Brainard, Neb. (East Butler)

Makovicka, an eight-man player in high school, is the latest of a list of hard-working, football-smart fullbacks who came to Nebraska as walk-ons. He was preceded on the list by his brother, Jeff.

Makovicka alternated with Brian Schuster, another on the walk-on list, last season. He got one start, against Kansas, and responded by rushing for a career-best 49 yards on five carries.

He also showed that he can catch the ball if needed. He had three receptions for 28 yards for the season and caught a two-point conversion



J.C. Ridley

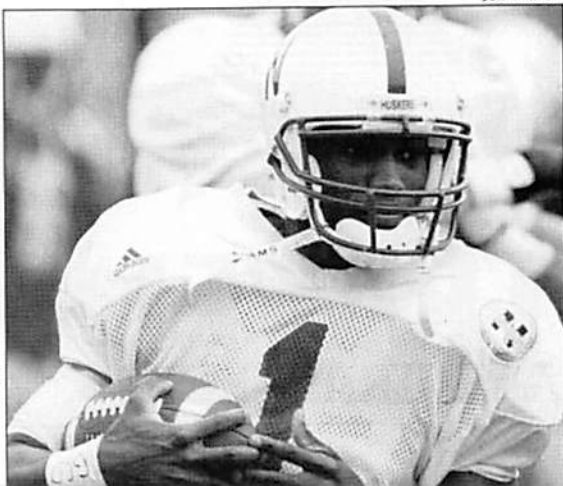
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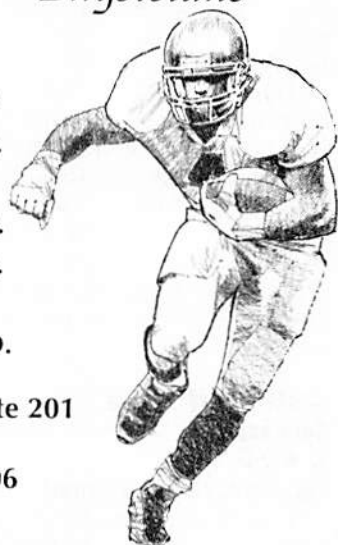
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pass from Jon Vedral in the Iowa State game.

Frank Solich: "Joel's an excellent fullback in our system, a very smart, very intelligent player. He knows our offense very well. He knows how to execute it, and then he has the physical strength and the power you need to do the things a fullback needs to do for you."

#4 Octavious McFarlin
Weakside Linebacker
5-11, 195, Sr.
Bastrop, Texas

McFarlin was Mike Minter's backup for 10 games last season then alternated with Eric Stokes at rover after Minter was moved to weakside linebacker to replace Terrell Farley. McFarlin also began learning the weakside linebacker's responsibilities before the Colorado game.

He had an exceptional game as a weakside linebacker against Virginia Tech in the Orange Bowl. He was involved in nine tackles and had 1 1/2 quarterback sacks for 14.5 yards in losses.

Craig Bohl: "Octavious is an awfully physical player. He's really a heady football player in there, too. Octavious played well in the (Orange) bowl game."

#32 Willie Miller
Fullback
6-1, 240, Fr.
Omaha, Neb. (Bellevue West)

Miller, like Dan Alexander, redshirted last season. He was overshadowed, to some degree, by Alexander in the spring. But his credentials are no less impressive.

He played for former Cornhusker John Faiman at Bellevue West High School, leading the state's largest class in rushing as a senior. He gained 1,527 yards and scored 18 touchdowns.

Miller was a first-team high school All-American, according to *SuperPrep* magazine. Also like Alexander, one observer said, Miller "looks great in a uniform."

Frank Solich: "Willie is very much in it at fullback. He missed some spring ball because of an

injury, a pulled quadricep. That took him out of it a little bit. But with the playing time he got in the spring, he showed an awful lot."

#37 Tony Ortiz
Strongside Linebacker
6-0, 210, Soph.
Waterbury, Conn. (Crosby)

Ortiz, a much-heralded scholarship recruit, has been slow in developing, in part because of a bout with mono before he reported for his first fall camp at Nebraska in 1995. His credentials are impeccable. He was a *Parade* All-American linebacker as a high school senior. He also played running back, rushing for 1,638 yards and scoring 30 touchdowns in his final season.

He played in nine games last season and was credited with 10 tackles.

Craig Bohl: "Tony has improved. He's got excellent blitzing ability, and he's gaining an understanding of the defense. We're anxious to see how productive he is in the fall."

#8 Jeff Perino
Quarterback
6-2, 200, Soph.
Durango, Colo.

Perino has been slowed by recurrent soreness in his right knee, a carry-over from high school. He's Nebraska's best pure passer, though he threw only two passes last season, both incomplete. He played in just seven games, as the No. 3 quarterback behind Scott Frost and Matt Turman.

Perino didn't play quarterback until his junior year in high school and missed most of his senior season because of a dislocated kneecap. Even so, he posted impressive numbers. In four games, he completed 66-of-110 passes for 890 yards and seven TDs. He also ran for 340 yards and seven TDs.

Turner Gill: "Jeff is very talented at throwing the football.

He's a very accurate passer. He has to work a little bit, I'd say, on his quickness and a little bit on speed. His biggest thing is probably just staying healthy. He has a bad knee, but he held up pretty good (in the spring)."

#55 Jason Peter
Defensive Tackle
6-5, 285, Sr.
Locust, N.J. (Milford Academy)

Peter was a first-team All-Big 12 selection by both the conference coaches and the Associated Press last season. Nebraska is touting him as an All-America candidate this season. He's not overly big for a defensive tackle but he's tenacious and uses his leverage to optimum advantage.

He's very athletic for his size, ranking seventh on the performance index in post-winter conditioning tests. He's also tough, as evidenced by the fact that he suffered a broken hand in the Texas Tech game and yet never missed a beat, playing the remainder of the season with a cast on the hand.

Peter will be among the Cornhusker leaders on defense in 1997.

Charlie McBride: "Jason has great hands and quickness. He gets very low. He uses that to the best advantage. He also uses his hands very well. He's a good inside pass rusher."

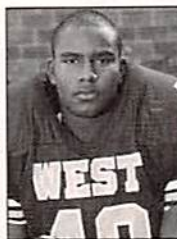
Octavious McFarlin



Jason PETER



Jon Waller



#11 Jerome Peterson

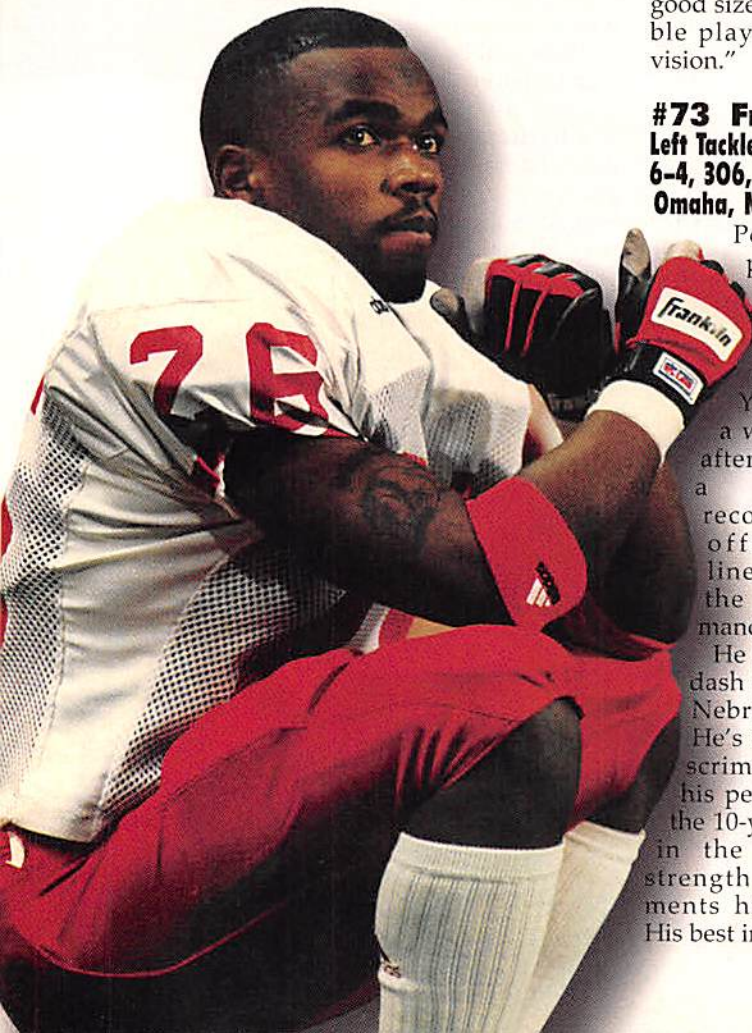
Cornerback
5-7, 185, Soph.
Port Allen, La.

Peterson was an all-state running back in high school, rushing for nearly 4,000 yards as a junior and senior — the only two seasons he played, after moving from Oakland, Calif. He played in nine games as a back-up cornerback last season, making six tackles and breaking up one pass.

He worked hard in the off-season. The results were apparent in post-winter conditioning tests. He tied I-back Ahman Green for the second-fastest time in the 40-yard dash, 4.42, and he ran the third-best time in the 10-yard dash, 1.51. He obviously has the speed to play man-to-man coverage.

George Darlington: "The improvement of Jerome Peterson really helps. He might have been the most improved player in the secondary. He came out of the spring as the No. 1 left corner."

Jerome PETERSON



#13 Carlos Polk

Middle Linebacker
6-3, 225, Fr.
Rockford, Ill. (Guilford)

Polk, who redshirted last fall, wasn't even on the pre-spring depth chart. But his play, as well as that of Ben Buettenback, allowed sophomore Julius Jackson to move to weakside linebacker.



Polk had an outstanding high school career, finishing among the leading tacklers in Illinois prep history. His career tackle total was a remarkable 453, including 30 for losses totaling 150 yards. He also had 10 fumble recoveries, seven blocked kicks and five pass interceptions.

He could follow in the footsteps of last year's starting middle linebacker, Jon Hesse, who first established himself as a stand-up, "bubble" linebacker on the line of scrimmage.

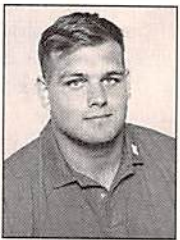
Craig Bohl: "Carlos is a guy who showed up (well) in several scrimmages in the spring. He has good size for what we call a 'bubble player.' He also has good vision."

#73 Fred Pollack

Left Tackle
6-4, 306, Sr.
Omaha, Neb. (Creighton Prep)

Pollack has tremendous potential based on his athletic ability. He was a candidate for NU's Lifter of the Year award, after setting a team record for offensive linemen in the performance index.

He has lowered his 40-yard dash time since he's been at Nebraska from 5.41 to 5.00. He's explosive off the line of scrimmage, as indicated by his personal bests of 1.75 in the 10-yard dash and 28 inches in the vertical jump. His strength complements his speed. His best in the hang



clean is 363 pounds. His best in the squat is 592 pounds. He needs to keep his weight in check.

Milt Tenopir: "He has excellent athletic ability. His biggest problem over the years has just been concentration. Physically, he's one of the better athletes we've had. He's got all the tools."

#13 Ted Retzlaff

Place-kicker
6-0, 190, Sr.
Waverly, Neb.

Retzlaff, a walk-on like Billy LaFleur and Jesse Kosch, was perfect on 13 extra-point kicks last season. He also was perfect on 11 extra-point kicks as a sophomore, and was 2-for-2 as a red-shirted freshman. Like LaFleur, he played quarterback and safety besides kicking in high school.



He missed all of spring practice before his sophomore season after suffering a torn ACL on his kicking leg and undergoing reconstructive surgery, opening the door for Kris Brown.

Dan Young: "Both Bill (LaFleur) and Ted were good players coming out of high school. Both of them could play at a lot of schools. Both will be backups and very good players for us."

#84 Mike Rucker

Rush End
6-6, 250, Jr.
St. Joseph, Mo. (Benton)

There have been seasons at Nebraska in which Rucker would



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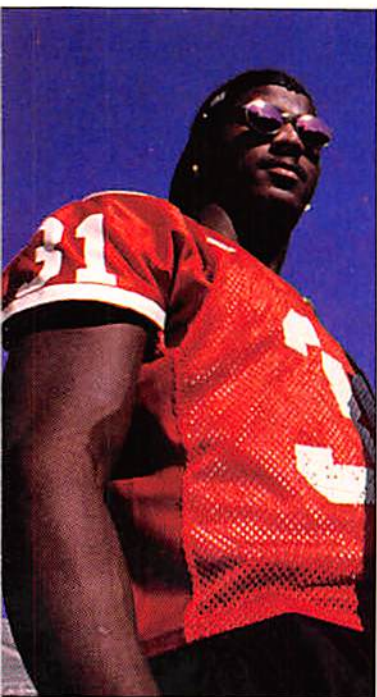


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**Jay
SIMS**

be a clear-cut starter. He was moved from the right side, where he backed up Grant Wistrom, to the left side in the spring, joining Chad Kelsay to give the Cornhuskers a talented tandem there. Rucker's experience in playing on both ends of the line will be a plus. He's a "big-play football player," according to defensive coordinator Charlie McBride. Though a backup, Rucker was second on the team to Wistrom in sacks and tackles for loss last season. And yes, he knocked off Joe Gordon's helmet with a punt-return block in the 1995 Kansas State game.

Nelson Barnes: "Mike's a very good pass rusher. He has very good instincts on the pass rush. He uses his hands real well. He has surprisingly good strength for a guy who's as rangy as he is."

#46 Brian Shaw
Strongside Linebacker
6-0, 215, Soph.
Deweese, Neb. (Sandy Creek)

Former Cornhusker rush ends coach Tony Samuel described Shaw as a "great, great find." Shaw walked on from a small Nebraska high school, where he played running back on offense. In his final three seasons, he rushed for more than 5,000 yards, evidence of his speed and athleticism.

Shaw also won five Class C gold medals at the state track and field meet as a junior and senior, in the 110-meter hurdles, the 300-meter hurdles and the 400 meters. He had the fourth-best point total on the performance index in post-winter conditioning tests. He played in every game as Jamel Williams' backup last season, making 22 tackles, including 10 unassisted and 1 1/2 sacks.

Craig Bohl: "Brian's an excel-



lent open-field tackler. He has a great grasp of our defense and made a lot of plays in the spring. I've really been pleased with Brian. He's continued to improve."

#63 James Sherman
Left Guard
6-2, 300, Soph.
LaVerne, Calif. (Whittier)

Sherman had another arthroscopic knee surgery after the Orange Bowl. He's been slowed by knee problems during his brief time at Nebraska. He missed the first two games last season while recovering from arthroscopic surgery. He saw his first action as a Cornhusker against Colorado State.

Even though he got only eight snaps against the Rams, one of them was a countersweep to his side on which I-back DeAngelo Evans scored his first touchdown at Nebraska. The play covered 30 yards.

"If he was well and playing well, he'd give us some depth," Tom Osborne said of Sherman.

Milt Tenopir: "We've got some kids who are just kind of unknowns (as backups). You've got Sherman coming off some knee surgery. He wasn't able to go in the spring. We're counting on him to help."

#31 Jay Sims
I-Back
6-1, 220, Sr.
Omaha, Neb. (West Memphis, Ark.)

Sims was No. 1 on the performance index in post-winter conditioning tests. But he's No. 3 on the depth chart at I-back, an indication of just how solid that position is with everyone healthy.

Sims has size and speed; he tied with split end Jeff Lake for the fifth-fastest time in the 40-yard dash in March testing 4.48 seconds. He averaged 7 yards per carry last season. His big game was against Oklahoma, when he rushed for 98 yards and two touchdowns. He also rushed for 48 yards on only eight carries in the Orange Bowl game. At age 25, he's the "old man" on the



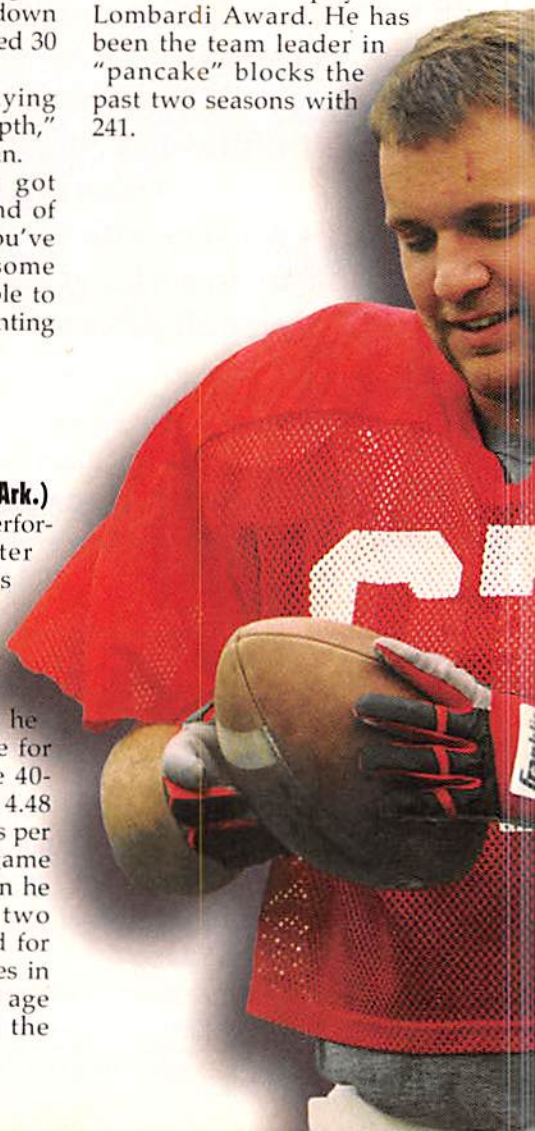
team.

Frank Solich: "Jay's coming off the tail end of last season where he got a great deal of playing time and really responded well to the chances he got. I anticipate he'll work very hard this summer so he'll put himself in a position where he'll again get some good playing time."

#67 Aaron Taylor
Left Guard
6-1, 305, Sr.
Wichita Falls, Texas (Rider)

Taylor started 12 games at center last season, after establishing himself as an all-conference guard as a sophomore. He's self-effacing and very team-oriented, as evidenced by his willingness to switch positions. Despite the move, he was a first-team All-American according to *The Football News*, the Football Writers Association of America and the Walter Camp Foundation.

He also was a semifinalist for the Outland Trophy and the Lombardi Award. He has been the team leader in "pancake" blocks the past two seasons with 241.



#92 Travis Toline

Rush End
6-3, 235, Jr.
Wahoo, Neb.

Toline follows in the tradition of Wahoo High graduates who complement athletic talent with academic success. Among the recent names on that list are Steve Volin, a walk-on football player, and Jason Glock, a scholarship basketball player. Toline is an excellent student, majoring in mechanical engineering.



He played in every game last season as a backup on the left side and on the kickoff team. He was credited with 15 tackles, six of which came against Kansas.

Nelson Barnes: "Out of the top guys, Travis is probably the slowest. But he's very smart. He's a very instinctive player."

#71 Mike Van Cleave

Tackle/Guard
6-2, 295, Sr.
Huffman, Texas (Hargrave)

Van Cleave, like Matt Hoskinson, is a walk-on who has done whatever was asked of him to help the offensive line with



depth. He played guard last season but was moved to tackle in the spring because of the rash of injury problems at the position. He's not as fast as some of the other linemen, but he makes up for a lack of speed with effort. He played in 11 games, including the Orange Bowl, a year ago.

He was credited with eight "pancake" blocks. He also was a regular on the PAT and field goal units.

Milt Tenopir: "We put Mike at tackle (in the spring) because we were thin there. Whether or not we leave him there all depends on the depth we have at the guard spot (in the fall)."

#27 Joe Walker

Cornerback
5-11, 185, Fr.
Arlington, Texas (Arlington-Lamar)

Walker sat out a semester following his high school graduation. He arrived at Nebraska in January and went through spring practice. Like Clint Finley, he was a high school quarterback, rushing for 1,300 yards and 30 touchdowns and passing for 1,200 yards and 12 touchdowns as a senior.

He also was a high school sprinter, with bests of 10.5 seconds in the 100 meters and 21.6 in the 200 meters. He is explosive, tying for the fourth-fastest time at 10 yards in post-winter conditioning tests (1.52).

George Darlington: "Joe demonstrated excellent hitting ability. He could end up inside (at safety). It's going to take fall camp to determine who is going to end up where, with some obvious exceptions. Joe should be a contributor in the secondary and also as a punt returner."

#3 Eric Warfield

Free Safety
6-0, 195, Sr.
Texarkana, Ark.

Warfield has yet to start a game at Nebraska. But he's regarded by the coaches as the equivalent of a returning starter. He played a lot last season, making 39 tackles, including 18 unassisted and two for losses of 9 yards. He intercepted three passes and broke up three.

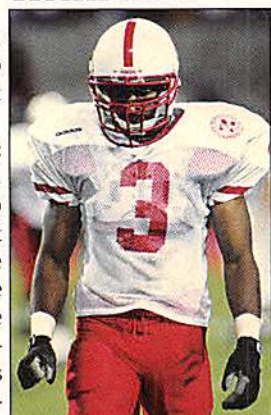
He was at his best in big games against Colorado and

Texas. He made seven tackles, six of them solo, against the Buffaloes, and he had six tackles and a pass interception against the Longhorns.

He is aggressive and a hard-hitter. He also blocked three punts last season.

George Darlington: "Eric had a good spring, and he also did a great job as a leader. He has great coverage skill and the speed and quickness to be a man-to-man coverage player. He should be first-team All-Big 12, and he has a chance to be an All-American."

Eric WARFIELD

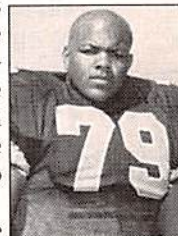


J.C. Ridley

#96 Steve Warren

Nosetackle
6-3, 275, Soph.
Springfield, Mo. (Kickapoo)

Warren probably would have been redshirted last season if the Cornhuskers could have afforded that luxury. But because of a lack of depth in the defensive line, he needed to play.



He had the physical tools. "The first game I played, it was the speed and all the technique," Warren said. "It wasn't so much, was I strong enough? It was the speed with which things happened."

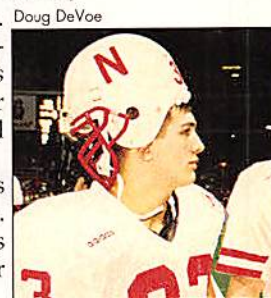
He played sparingly in eight games, making six tackles, including one-half sack. And he recovered a fumble. He was SuperPrep's Midlands Defensive Player of the Year as a high school senior.

Charlie McBride: "His endurance is a concern. He's one of those guys who's good for six or seven plays. He's a pretty mature kid. It's just a matter of repetition with him."

#33 Sean Wieting

Wingback
5-9, 190, Sr.
Tulatin, Ore. (Tigard)

Wieting could easily have gotten lost in the shuffle, as a walk-on among scholarship players.



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But he played well in the spring and worked his way up the depth chart to No. 4. In addition to playing sparingly at wingback, he was a regular on the kickoff team. He caught one pass for 6 yards.

Ron Brown: "Sean's a very reliable, scrappy-type player and an excellent route runner. He's a senior and he has a lot of savvy to him."

#5 Shevin Wiggins
Wingback
5-11, 190, Jr.
Palmetto, Fla. (Manatee)

The former Florida high school Offensive Player of the Year will have a different look about him this season, and not just because he has traded the No. 29 jersey he wore as a sophomore for the No. 5 Brendan Holbein wore. Wiggins was more assertive and consistent in the spring.



He showed signs of that development as last season progressed. He caught only three passes for 45 yards during the regular season, but then equaled that total (a team high), gaining 36 yards in the Orange Bowl victory. He started the Orange Bowl game in place of suspended senior Jon Vedral.

Ron Brown: "Shevin has come along well. I've seen a lot of maturity between the end of last season and now. He's showing more confidence. You can see it in his personality."

#81 Aaron Wills
Rush End
6-2, 250, Soph.
Omaha, Neb. (Burke)

Wills was named to the *Omaha World-Herald* All-Nebraska and *Lincoln Journal Star* Super-State teams as a defensive player. But he began his Cornhusker career as a tight end. He was moved to defense in the spring, in part because the coaches were impressed with his tenacity.



Nelson Barnes: "Aaron has

been a very pleasant surprise to me. He's probably, next to Grant (Wistrom), the most aggressive guy in our group . . . if not THE most aggressive. He's an all-out player."

#99 Jason Wiltz
Nosetackle
6-3, 295, Jr.
New Orleans, La.
(St. Augustine)

Wiltz played in every game as a backup last season. He was involved in 20 tackles, including one quarterback sack, and he forced two fumbles. He also played sparingly as a backup in 1995.



He has lacked focus at times, according to the coaches. But he showed in the spring that he's ready to step up and become a starter. He can play either tackle or nosetackle, a plus for the travel roster. He is athletic enough that he played first and pitched on his high school baseball team.

Charlie McBride: "Jason's got room to grow strength-wise. He's got good athletic ability. Weight is a concern. He's really got to watch it this summer. If he gets his weight down, he'll be a factor."

#98 Grant Wistrom
Rush End
6-5, 250, Sr.
Webb City, Mo.

Wistrom already has established himself among the best ever to play his position (and comparable position before Nebraska's switch to a 4-3 base alignment). He has nothing to prove to Cornhusker fans, who were blessed when he decided to stay in school instead of declaring for the NFL draft.

He was a first-team All-American, an Academic All-American and the Big 12 Defensive Player of the Year last season. He's almost certain to be a prime candidate for the Outland Trophy and Lombardi Award this season.

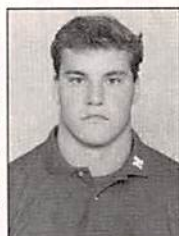
He made 75 tackles, including a team-high 9.5 sacks for 48 yards in losses, last season.

Nelson Barnes: "Grant had an

excellent spring. He has great, great instincts and a great work ethic."

#64 Jon Zatechka
Right Guard
6-2, 290, Sr.
Lincoln, Neb. (East)

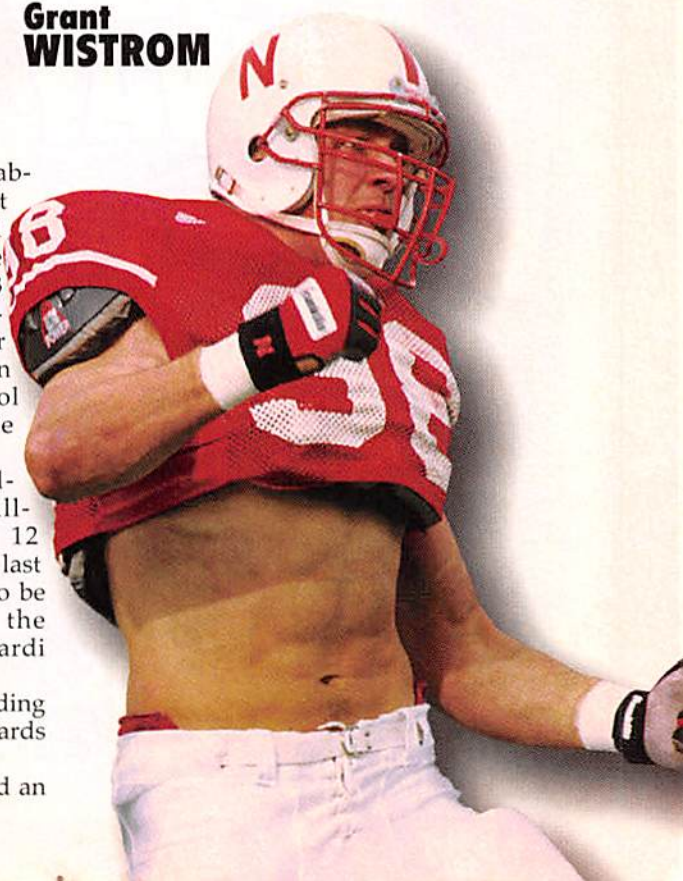
Zatechka, an academic all-district selection last season, was a candidate for Lifter of the Year. His improvement during his time at Nebraska is evidence of his dedication in the weight room.



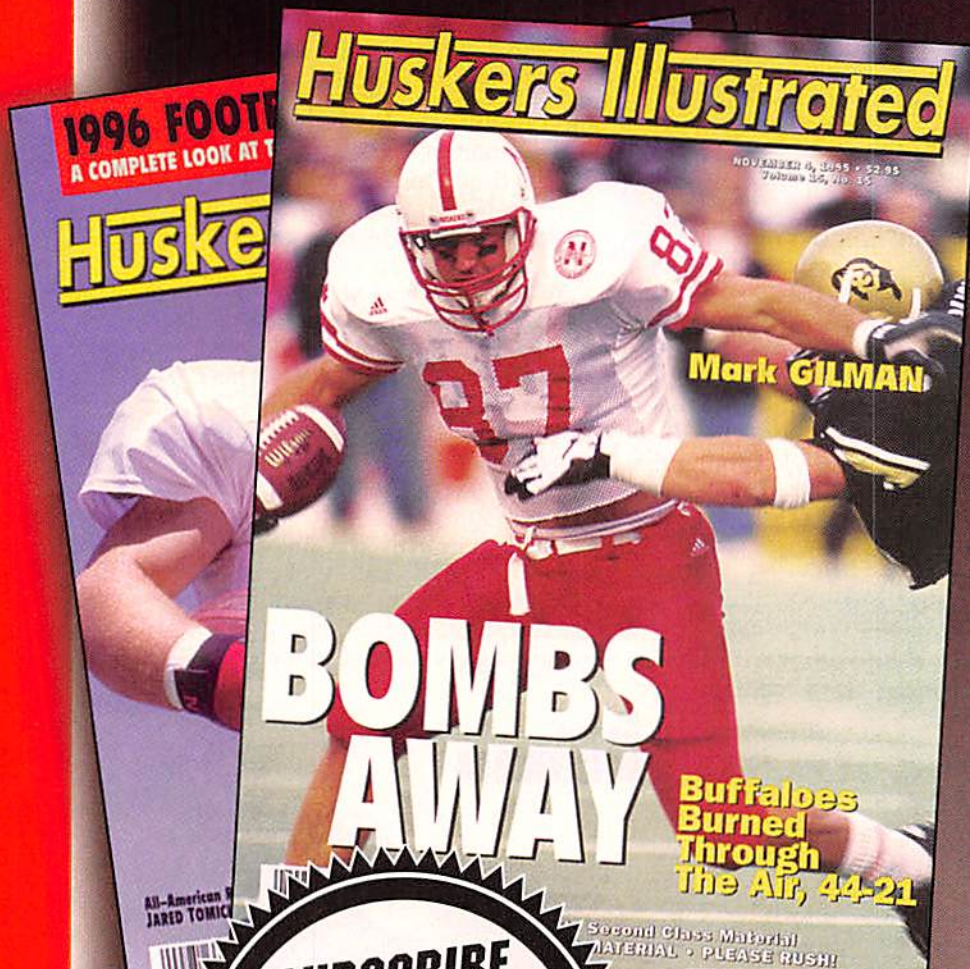
His times in the 10- and 40-yard dashes dropped from 1.88 to 1.74 and 5.46 to 5.14, respectively. He lowered his time in the pro agility run to 4.20 seconds and increased his vertical jump to 31.5 inches. His hang clean has gone from 324 to 383 pounds, and his squat has gone from 447 to 572 pounds. He holds the Cornhusker record for an offensive linemen in the strength index.

Milt Tenopir: "Jon will be a two-year starter, but he played a lot the previous two seasons in a back-up role. Jon is one of the stronger guys we have in there."

Grant WISTROM



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1996 BIG 12 IN REVIEW

FINAL STANDINGS

CONFERENCE						OVERALL				
	W	L	PCT.	PF	PA	W	L	PCT.	PF	PA
North Division										
Nebraska	8	1	.888	365	74	11	2	.846	553	174
Colorado	7	1	.875	221	126	10	2	.833	352	220
Kansas State	6	2	.750	197	162	9	3	.750	340	191
Missouri	3	5	.375	197	307	5	6	.455	278	376
Kansas	2	6	.250	171	286	4	7	.364	300	358
Iowa State	1	7	.125	221	299	2	9	.182	314	401
South Division										
Texas	7	2	.777	317	169	8	5	.615	447	305
Texas Tech	5	3	.625	197	149	7	5	.583	323	232
Texas A&M	4	4	.500	174	174	6	6	.500	351	257
Oklahoma	3	5	.375	193	290	3	8	.273	255	392
Oklahoma State	2	6	.250	159	281	5	6	.455	243	327
Baylor	1	7	.125	186	281	4	7	.364	266	320

POST-SEASON ACTION

Big 12 Championship Game	
Texas 37, Nebraska 27	
Builders Square Alamo Bowl	
Iowa 27, Texas Tech 0	
Plymouth Holiday Bowl	
Colorado 33, Washington 21	
Federal Express Orange Bowl	
Nebraska 41, Virginia Tech 21	
Southwestern Bell Cotton Bowl	
Brigham Young 19, Kansas State 15	
Tostitos Fiesta Bowl	
Penn State 38, Texas 15	

TEAM STATISTICS

(National rankings in parentheses)

RUSHING OFFENSE

	G	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD	YPG
1. NU (4)	12	691	3503	5.1	45	291.9
2. TT (7)	11	573	3008	5.2	27	273.5
3. MU (9)	11	553	2758	5.0	24	250.7
4. ISU (13)	11	524	2615	5.0	25	237.7
5. A&M (17)	12	565	2764	4.9	30	230.3
6. OSU (20)	11	530	2456	4.6	20	223.3
7. UT (24)	12	487	2519	5.2	33	209.9
8. OU (28)	11	462	2184	4.7	16	198.5
9. KU (50)	11	510	1795	3.5	20	163.2
10. BAY (61)	11	432	1641	3.8	17	149.2
11. CU (62)	11	409	1635	4.0	17	148.6
12. KSU (75)	11	428	1495	3.5	21	135.9

RUSHING DEFENSE

	G	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD	YPG
1. NU (5)	12	447	1006	2.3	7	83.8
2. A&M (14)	12	461	1256	2.7	12	104.7
3. CU (31)	11	420	1438	3.4	10	130.7
4. TT (41)	11	416	1551	3.7	14	141.0
5. OU (44)	11	504	1589	3.2	17	144.5
6. KSU (63)	11	493	1770	3.6	10	160.9
7. MU (85)	11	475	2219	4.7	25	201.7
8. UT (86)	12	553	2441	4.4	23	203.4
9. KU (93)	11	477	2367	5.0	26	215.2
10. OSU (97)	11	465	2479	5.3	28	225.4
11. ISU (106)	11	503	2886	5.7	32	262.4
12. BAY (111)	11	560	3145	5.6	27	285.9

PASSING OFFENSE

	G	AT	CP	IT	PCT	YDS	YPA	TD	YPG
1. CU (10)	11	390	221	14	56.7	3338	8.6	22	303.5
2. UT (23)	12	371	212	13	57.1	3006	8.1	19	250.5
3. KU (63)	11	290	155	8	53.4	2055	7.1	17	186.8
4. KSU (65)	11	304	176	7	57.9	2030	6.7	21	184.5
5. OU (66)	11	308	136	15	44.2	2012	6.5	15	182.9
6. BAY (68)	11	311	157	8	50.5	2006	6.5	18	182.4
7. A&M (73)	12	327	157	8	48.0	2090	6.4	9	174.2
8. OSU (78)	11	283	148	10	52.3	1839	6.5	9	167.2
9. TT (83)	11	272	119	6	43.8	1723	6.3	11	156.6
10. ISU (96)	11	239	127	11	53.1	1511	6.3	13	137.4
11. NU (100)	12	222	113	3	50.9	1566	7.1	14	130.5
12. MU (101)	11	230	120	13	52.2	1403	6.1	11	127.5

PASS EFFICIENCY DEFENSE

	G	ATT	CMP	YDS	TD	INT	YPG
1. KSU (4)	11	299	126	1509	9	13	85.8
2. NU (7)	12	329	149	2059	8	23	91.9
3. TT (18)	11	342	152	2262	9	14	100.5
4. CU (23)	11	349	177	2032	10	13	101.6
5. UT (27)	12	322	155	2035	7	9	102.8
6. BAY (43)	11	279	136	2002	14	11	117.7
7. OSU (45)	11	267	135	2000	8	7	118.1
8. A&M (50)	12	382	201	2688	18	13	120.5
9. KU (98)	11	279	152	2456	18	12	141.1
10. OU (102)	11	308	181	2330	24	5	144.8
11. ISU (104)	11	311	192	2438	22	9	145.1
12. MU (105)	11	254	142	2103	21	9	145.7

TOTAL OFFENSE

	G	PLYS	YDS	AVG	TD	YPG
1. UT (11)	12	858	5525	6.4	52	460.42
2. CU (15)	11	799	4973	6.2	39	452.09
3. TT (23)	11	845	4731	5.6	38	430.09
4. NU (25)	12	913	5069	5.6	59	422.42
5. A&M (34)	12	892	4854	5.4	39	404.50
6. OSU (39)	11	813	4295	5.3	29	390.45
7. OU (46)	11	770	4196	5.4	31	381.45
8. MU (49)	11	783	4161	5.3	35	378.27
9. ISU (51)	11	763	4128	5.4	38	375.09
10. KU (68)	11	800	3850	4.8	37	350.00
11. BAY (76)	11	743	3647	4.9	35	331.55
12. KSU (86)	11	732	3525	4.8	42	320.45

TOTAL DEFENSE

	G	PLYS	YDS	AVG	TD	YPG
1. NU (7)	12	776	3065	3.9	15	255.4
2. KSU (16)	11	792	3279	4.1	19	298.1
3. CU (23)	11	769	3470	4.5	20	315.5
4. A&M (33)	12	843	3944	4.7	30	328.7
5. TT (43)	11	758	3813	5.0	23	346.6
6. OU (53)	11	812	3919	4.8	41	356.3
7. UT (65)	12	875	4476	5.1	30	373.0
8. MU (77)	11	729	4322	5.9	46	392.9
9. OSU (84)	11	732	4479	6.1	36	407.2
10. KU (95)	11	756	4823	6.4	44	438.5
11. BAY (106)	11	839	5147	6.1	41	467.9
12. ISU (108)	11	814	5324	6.5	54	484.0

SCORING OFFENSE

	G	PTS	AVG	TD	K	P	K	P	FG	SF
1. NU (4)	12	512	42.7	68	64	1	0	0	12	1
2. UT (12)	12	432	36.0	54	51	0	0	0	19	0
3. KSU (34)	11	325	29.5	45	43	0	0	0	4	0
4. TT (36)	11	323	29.4	41	32	2	0	0	13	1
5. A&M (37)	12	351	29.3	43	35	2	0	0	18	0
6. CU (39)	11	319	29.0	42	37	0	0	0	10	0
7. ISU (41)	11	314	28.5	41	33	3	0	0	9	1
8. KU (49)	11	300	27.3	40	34	1	0	0	8	0
9. MU (54)	11	278	25.3	36	34	1	1	0	8	0
10. BAY (62)	11	266	24.2	36	35	0	0	0	5	0
11. OU (66)	11	255	23.2	32	27	2	0	0	10	1
12. OSU (73)	11	243	22.1	30	27	0	0	0	12	0

SCORING DEFENSE

	G	PTS	AVG	TD	KXP	OXF	FG	SF
1. NU (5)	12	153	12.8	16	15	0	12	3
2. KSU (11)	11	172	15.6	19	13	2	13	1
3. CU (21)	11	199	18.1	23	20	1	13	0
4. TT (23)	11	205	18.6	25	24	1	9	1
5. A&M (38)	12	257	21.4	33	25	2	10	0
6. UT (44)	12	267	22.3	32	26	2	15	0
7. BAY (77)	11	320	29.1	43	39	1	7	0
8. OSU (80)	11	327	29.7	39	36	0	19	0
9. KU (90)	11	358	32.5	47	44	0	10	1
10. MU (95)	11	376	34.2	51	46	1	6	2
11. OU (100)	11	392	35.6	49	47	0	17	0
12. ISU (104)	11	401	36.5	55	46	2	7	0

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INDIVIDUAL LEADERS

(National rankings in parentheses/ 1997 returners in bold)

RUSHING

Player, School, Class (Ranking)	G	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD	YPG
1. Troy Davis, ISU, Jr. (1)	11	402	2185	5.4	21	198.64
2. Byron Hanspard, TT, Jr. (2)	11	339	2084	6.1	13	189.45
3. David Thompson, OSU, Sr. (8)	11	293	1524	5.2	13	138.55
4. June Henley, KU, Sr. (10)	10	302	1349	4.5	17	134.90
5. DeMond Parker, OU, Fr. (22)	11	180	1184	6.6	10	107.64
6. Ricky Williams, UT, So. (27)	12	205	1272	6.2	12	106.00
7. Ahman Green, NU, So. (42)	10	155	917	5.9	7	91.70
8. Mike Lawrence, KSU, Jr. (47)	11	209	982	4.7	10	89.27
9. Herchell Troutman, CU, Jr.	10	193	804	4.2	4	80.40
10. DeAngelo Evans, NU, Fr.	11	148	776	5.2	14	70.55

PASSING EFFICIENCY

(Min. Five Attempts Per Game)										RATING
Player, School, Class (Ranking)	G	AT	CP	PCT	I	YDS	TD	PTS		
1. Koy Detmer, CU, Sr. (15)	11	363	208	57.30	12	3156	22	143.7		
2. Ben Rutz, KU, Sr.	9	103	59	57.28	3	823	7	141.0		
3. Richard Walton, UT, So.	12	62	38	61.29	1	509	2	137.7		
4. James Brown, UT, Jr. (25)	12	299	170	56.86	12	2468	17	136.9		
5. Brian Kavanagh, KSU, Sr. (27)	11	284	167	58.80	6	1893	20	133.8		
6. Scott Frost, NU, Jr. (32)	12	200	104	52.00	3	1440	13	130.9		
7. Jeff Watson, BAY, Jr.	9	127	67	52.76	3	858	10	130.8		
8. Matt Johner, KU, Jr. (49)	11	185	96	51.89	4	1232	10	121.3		
9. Todd Doxzon, ISU, Sr.	11	231	124	53.68	9	1498	12	117.5		
10. Tane Jones, OSU, Sr.	10	234	130	55.56	9	1551	8	114.8		

TOTAL OFFENSE

Player, School, Class (Ranking)	RUSH		PASS		TOTAL	
	G	AT	YDS	AT	YDS	YPG
1. Koy Detmer, CU, Sr. (9)	11	36	-6	363	3156	286.36
2. James Brown, UT, Jr. (29)	12	48	119	299	2468	215.58
3. Troy Davis, ISU, Jr. (41)	11	402	2185	0	0	198.64
4. Byron Hanspard, TT, Jr. (47)	11	339	2084	0	0	189.45
5. Zebbie Lethridge, TT, Jr. (48)	11	130	342	267	1686	184.36
6. Tane Jones, OSU, Sr.	10	71	170	234	1551	172.10
7. Brandon Stewart, A&M, Jr.	12	70	9	299	1904	159.42
8. Brian Kavanagh, KSU, Sr.	11	61	-170	284	1893	156.64
9. Scott Frost, NU, Jr.	12	126	438	200	1440	156.50
10. Todd Doxzon, ISU, Sr.	11	86	223	231	1498	156.45

ALL-PURPOSE RUNNERS

Player, School, Class (Ranking)	G	RUN	REC	PR	KO	YDS	YPG
1. Troy Davis, ISU, Jr. (1)	11	2185	61	0	118	2364	214.91
2. Byron Hanspard, TT, Jr. (2)	11	2084	192	0	0	2276	206.91
3. June Henley, KU, Sr. (6)	10	1349	215	0	209	1773	177.30
4. David Thompson, OSU, Sr. (13)	11	1524	225	0	0	1749	159.00
5. Ricky Williams, UT, So. (42)	12	1272	291	0	0	1563	130.25
6. Dante Hall, A&M, Fr. (47)	12	642	12	573	324	1551	129.25
7. DeMond Parker, OU, Fr.	11	1184	188	0	19	1391	126.45
8. Mike Lawrence, KSU, Jr.	11	982	173	17	149	1321	120.09
9. Ray Carruth, CU, Sr.	11	103	1116	0	0	1219	110.82
10. Kalief Muhammad, BAY, Sr.	11	101	479	163	412	1155	105.00

RECEIVING YARDS PER GAME

Player, School, Class (Ranking)	G	CT	YDS	TD	YPG	CPG	YPC
1. Rae Carruth, CU, Sr. (14)	11	54	1116	8	101.45	4.91	20.67
2. Kevin Lockett, KSU, Sr. (27)	11	72	882	6	80.18	6.55	12.25
3. Mike Adams, UT, Sr. (30)	12	56	942	5	78.50	4.67	16.82
4. Issac Byrd, KU, Sr. (34)	11	53	840	7	76.36	4.82	15.85
5. Albert Connell, A&M, Sr. (47)	12	57	872	6	72.67	4.75	15.30
6. Phil Savoy, CU, Jr.	11	43	652	3	59.27	3.91	15.16
7. Alonzo Mayes, OSU, Jr.	10	30	512	3	51.20	3.00	17.07
8. Mike McDaniel, OU, Sr.	11	28	553	6	50.27	2.55	19.75
9. Stephen Alexander, OU, Jr.	9	22	438	2	48.67	2.44	19.91
10. Donnie Hart, TT, So.	10	21	457	4	45.70	2.10	21.76

RECEPTIONS PER GAME

Player, School, Class (Ranking)	G	CT	YDS	TD	CPG	YPC
1. Kevin Lockett, KSU, Sr. (10)	11	72	882	6	6.55	12.25
2. Rae Carruth, CU, Sr. (32)	11	54	1116	8	4.91	20.67
3. Issac Byrd, KU, Sr. (35)	11	53	840	7	4.82	15.85
4. Albert Connell, A&M, Sr. (41)	12	57	872	6	4.75	15.30
5. Mike Adams, UT, Sr. (48)	12	56	942	5	5.67	16.82
6. Phil Savoy, CU, Jr.	11	43	652	3	3.91	15.16
7. Kalief Muhammad, BAY, Sr.	11	39	479	5	3.55	12.28
8. Pat Fitzgerald, UT, Sr.	12	38	545	2	3.17	14.34
9. Ed Williams, ISU, Jr.	11	34	491	3	3.09	14.44
10. Alonzo Mayes, OSU, Jr.	10	30	512	3	3.00	17.07

SCORING

Player, School, Class (Ranking)	G	TD	XP	FG	PTS	PTPG
1. Troy Davis, ISU, Jr. (2)	11	21	0	0	126	11.45
2. June Henley, KU, Sr. (6)	10	18	0	0	108	10.80
3. D'Andre Hardeman, A&M, So. (16)	12	18	0	0	108	9.00
4. Phil Dawson, UT, Jr. (16)	12	0	51	19	108	9.00
5. Byron Hanspard, TT, Jr. (35)	11	14	0	0	84	7.64
6. DeAngelo Evans, NU, Fr. (35)	11	14	0	0	84	7.64
7. Kyle Bryant, A&M, Jr. (44)	12	0	35	18	89	7.42
8. Kris Brown, NU, So. (49)	12	0	50	12	86	7.17
9. David Thompson, OSU, Sr.	11	13	0	0	78	7.09
10. Ricky Williams, UT, So.	12	14	0	0	84	7.00

INTERCEPTIONS

Player, School, Class (Ranking)	G	NO	YDS	TD	IPG
1. Steve Rosga, CU, Sr. (14)	11	5	140	1	.45
Chris Canty, KSU, Jr. (14)	11	5	47	0	.45
3. Mike Minter, NU, Sr. (27)	12	5	129	1	.42
4. Dean Jackson, BAY, Jr.	11	4	48	0	.36
Jason Harris, KU, Jr.	11	4	0	0	.36
6. Ralph Brown, NU, Fr.	12	4	83	1	.33
7. Dawan Anderson, ISU, So.	11	3	84	2	.27
Robert Johnson, TT, Sr.	11	3	57	1	.27
Tony Blevins, KU, Sr.	11	3	17	0	.27
Mike Lincavage, ISU, Sr.	11	3	8	0	.27

1996 FIRST-TEAM ALL-BIG 12 FOOTBALL

(Selectors were Big 12 Coaches/1997 returners in bold/1996 classification shown)

OFFENSE

WR	Rae Carruth, Sr., Colorado
WR	Kevin Lockett, Sr., Kansas State
TE	Alonzo Mayes, Jr., Okla. St.
OL	Chris Naeole, Sr., Colorado
OL	Chris Dishman, Sr., Nebraska
OL	Aaron Taylor, Jr., Nebraska
OL	Dan Neil, Sr., Texas
OL	Calvin Collins, Sr., Texas A&M
QB	Koy Detmer, Sr., Colorado
RB	Troy Davis, Jr., Iowa State
RB	Ricky Williams, So., Texas
RB	Byron Hanspard, Jr., Texas Tech
PK	Phil Dawson, Jr., Texas
PR	Kalief Muhammad, Sr., Baylor

DEFENSE

RE	Grant Wistrom, Jr., Nebraska
RE	Nyle Wiren, Sr., Kansas State
IL	Ryan Olson, Jr., Colorado
IL	Jason Peter, Jr., Nebraska
IL	Brandon Mitchell, Sr., Texas A&M
ILB	Matt Russell, Sr., Colorado
ILB	Tyrell Peters, Sr., Oklahoma
DB	Steve Rosga, Sr., Colorado
DB	Chris Canty, Jr., Kansas State
DB	Mario Smith, Sr., Kansas State
DB	Bryant Westbrook, Sr., Texas
P	Ty Atteberry, Sr., Baylor

SPECIALTY HONORS

Coach of the Year
Spike Dykes, TT

Offensive
Player of the Year
Troy Davis, ISU

Defensive
Player of the Year
Grant Wistrom, NU

Offensive
Newcomer of the Year
Scott Frost, NU

Defensive
Newcomer of the Year
Gana Joseph, OU

Offensive
Freshman of the Year
DeMond Parker, OU

Defensive
Freshman of the Year
Mark Simoneau, KSU

1. Florida 2. North Carolina 3. Nebraska 4. Washington 5. Tennessee 6. Florida State 7. Colorado 8. Michigan 9. Notre Dame 10. LSU
11. Ohio State 12. Miami 13. Penn State 14. Alabama 15. USC 16. Auburn 17. Texas 18. Iowa 19. UCLA 20. Colorado State

After years

of using it as an excuse for subpar records, parity finally truly has come to college football. Anyone interested in talking playoffs yet?

For the first time in any year we could remember, there isn't a clear cut preseason No. 1 team. Convincing arguments can be (and were) made, both for and against, any of the teams in the top six of this year's poll. If there ever was going to be a football season where early rankings and cushy schedules can propel a team to a "national title game," it should be this year. That and a dose of lucky breaks.

Tennessee, the preseason favorite to win it all last year by many publications, probably will be the national darling again, what with future NFL millionaire Peyton Manning returning for his senior season. But the Vols have not been able to beat Florida in four years (including last season's contest in Knoxville, Tenn.), what makes anyone think Tennessee can march all the way to the promised land of the Orange Bowl? We don't.

Last year we predicted that Arizona State, relatively unknown outside of the West Coast, would not only win the Pac-10, but be a major player in the national title picture. Those words came painfully true as Bruce Snyder's squad embarrassed top-ranked Nebraska early in the year and fought their way to the Rose Bowl. Ohio State crushed the glass slipper on ASU's Cinderella season, but it was a run most won't forget too soon.

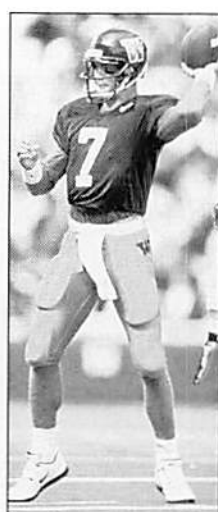
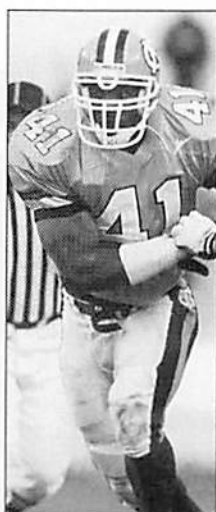
With a pat on the back and feeling a little bolder (some would say insane) we've picked another relative unknown to become a world — and Florida State — beater. North Carolina mirrors the Sun Devils of 1996 and could become the biggest surprise of the 1997 season. Remember where you heard it first.

Nebraska is still the king in the Big 12 although the gap is starting to close. If not for significant losses at key positions, Colorado (No. 7) and Texas (No. 17) might have made the challenge even closer. The Huskers' high ranking will get an early and difficult challenge when Tom Osborne takes his club to No. 4 Washington on Sept. 20 with only Akron and Central Florida providing preparation.

What national title race talk would this be without mentioning the Florida State Seminoles (No. 6). Key losses at both running back, corner and defensive end combined with a schedule that features road games against USC, Virginia, North Carolina and Florida and an Oct. 4 showdown with Miami (No. 12) in Tallahassee, makes the Seminoles' road a brutal one.

Standing in FSU's way once again will be defending national champion Florida. Sure the Gators lost Heisman Trophy winner Danny Wuerffel and receivers Reidel Anthony and Ike Hilliard from Steve Spurrier's high-octane offensive attack, but is that any reason to doubt the Gators have the best chance to pull off the back-to-back thing? Florida once again will put up outrageous numbers offensively and its defense could be one of the nation's best. Wins over the Seminoles and Vols should push Florida into the top spot going into the SEC championship game against LSU. What, you say? You mean the Bayou Bengals? That's right, 1997 definitely will be a different year in college football. ■ — Chris Greer

1997 TOP 20 NATIONAL



1st

2nd

3rd

4th

5th

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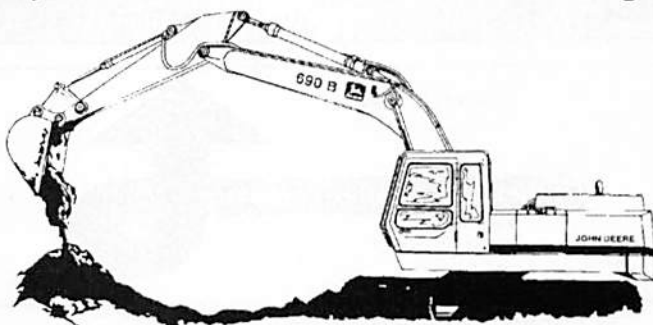
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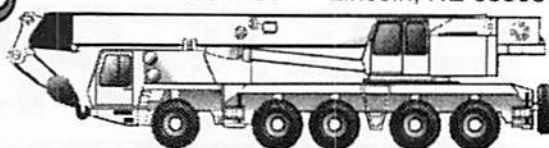
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The NCAA Football Rules Committee approved several rules changes during the February meeting in Tempe, Ariz.

Among the new rules in effect for the 1997 is a measure to help curtail four-overtime games.

Beginning in 1997, teams scoring a touchdown in the third overtime period will be required to go for a two-point conversion. Extra-point kicks will not be allowed.

The committee reasoned two-point conversion attempts are approximately half as successful as PATs at all levels of college football, and reducing the number of PATs will reduce the number of times both teams score the same number of points in a period after the second overtime. The rule has been added as a safety measure.

The committee also approved a rule requiring a game to be declared a tie if it is in overtime, but can't be continued due to weather, darkness or other conditions.

The committee also added rules restricting certain types of blocks, such as the crack back block and chop block. Punt returners will receive more protection now that the committee has increased the penalty from five to 15 yards for roughing the punt returner.

Other new rules:

- Approved the placement of "NCAA Football USA" logo on jerseys, helmets and fields;
- Agreed to start the game clock when the ball is

kicked on kickoffs, except with two minutes or less remaining in the half;

- Agreed to start the clock on the ready-for-play signal after a forward fumble that goes out of bounds;
- Prohibited fouls on scoring plays from being enforced on the kickoff or in the next period. Only dead-ball fouls after a field-goal or PAT attempt could carry over.

- Prohibited defensive players from delivering unnecessarily hard hits on an opponent behind the line of scrimmage who is in position to receive a pitch-out or lateral;

RULES UPDATE



Kevin Bartram

- Allowed conferences or institutions, by mutual agreement, to begin timing the 20 minutes of half time immediately after the second period ends. Previously the 20-minute break could not begin until the teams left the field;

- Changed the responsibility for removing obstructions outside the limit lines from the referee to game management;

- Deleted the requirement that the ball be kicked within one yard behind the restraining line on the free kick after a safety;

- Adopted a procedure for determining whether a game will be continued — and, if not, what the final score will be — if game management determines that a contest cannot be finished before the end of the fourth period;

- Prohibited ball-drying devices on the sidelines. ■



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1997 BIG 12 PREVIEW



MOST FOOTBALL

coaches will tell you that quarterbacks usually get too much of the credit when things go right on offense, and too much of the blame when things go wrong. Nevertheless, you can get a pretty fair read on the 1997 Big 12 race by considering the conference's quarterbacks.

The quarterback isn't the only factor, of course. For example, even though Texas Tech has the most experienced quarterback in either division — three-year starter Zebbie Lethridge — the Red Raiders aren't likely to unseat defending conference champion Texas in the South Division. But Lethridge might well make the difference between Texas Tech's finishing second instead of third in the division.

Whether or not Texas A&M can edge out the Red Raiders for the runner-up spot in the South likely will depend on how much better the Aggies' Brannndon Stewart is with a season's experience.

Texas has James Brown, the odds-on favorite to be first-team all-conference, so the Longhorns definitely aren't deficient at quarterback. Likewise, Nebraska and Colorado, the favorites in the North, have proven quarterbacks in Scott Frost and John Hessler, respectively.

Hessler didn't do much proving last season as Koy Detmer's backup. But he started eight games, plus the Cotton Bowl, as a sophomore, passing for 2,136 yards and 20 touchdowns.

The 20 touchdown passes were a school single-season record at the time. A healthy Detmer broke the record last season and, in so doing, kept Hessler on the sideline. Even so, coach Rick Neuheisel said he has complete confidence in Hessler, whom he has nicknamed the "Comeback Kid."

Frost had to shoulder the considerable burden of unfulfilled expectations at Nebraska last season. The Cornhuskers lost twice in 13 games and didn't win an unprecedented third consecutive national championship. If something doesn't kill you, it can make you stronger . . .



Frost was solid in Nebraska's 41-21 victory against Virginia Tech in the Orange Bowl game, completing 11-of-22 passes for 136 yards and rushing for 62 yards and two touchdowns. Afterward, he said he expected such a performance to be on the low end of the scale in 1997.

If so, then the Cornhuskers could make another run at a national championship.

Kansas State will be hard-pressed to challenge Nebraska and Colorado in the North because, for one thing, the Wildcats will be led by their fourth starting quarterback in as many years. Jonathan Beasley played sparingly in eight games as a true freshman backup to Brian Kavanagh.

But enough of quarterbacks for now. Consider the overall state of the Big 12 as it prepares for its second season with less bluster, if not humility. Convincing folks you're the nation's premier football conference is difficult when you can't fill all the bowl berths for which you've contracted.

The Big 12 was set to send six teams to bowl games last season. However, only five met the minimum standards of a winning record and six victories against NCAA Division I-A opponents.

Bowl bids were something of a sore subject for Colorado's Neuheisel, who was miffed that his Top 10-ranked Buffaloes were bypassed by the Cotton Bowl in favor of Kansas State. "We're the only team in the Top 12 not going to a Jan. 1 bowl," he said during a Big 12 teleconference in December.

"That doesn't sit well with us, and I don't think that's treating one of the marquee teams in this league with a lot of respect."

Texas complicated the situation by upsetting Nebraska, 37-27, in the conference playoff at St. Louis and getting an automatic Alliance Bowl bid. The Longhorns also gained some measure of revenge for the South, after the North had dominated interdivisional play by winning 12 of 18 games.

The Big 12 lost several of its top players before their time, as early-outs in the NFL draft. Among them were Iowa State running back Troy Davis, Kansas State cornerback Chris Canty and Texas Tech running back Byron Hanspard. The Red Raiders also lost defensive end Tony Daniels to the draft.

Nebraska got a big break when rush end Grant Wistrom, the conference Defensive Player of the Year, decided to stay and play his senior season before pursuing fame and fortune in the NFL.

Two new coaches will be on Big 12 sidelines this season. Kansas hired Terry Allen from Northern Iowa after Glen Mason packed up and headed to Minnesota, not long after affirming how satisfied he was to be in Lawrence, Kan. Allen was also a candidate for the Minnesota job. So it goes.

Baylor fired Chuck Reedy and hired Dave Roberts, who had been the offensive coordinator at Notre Dame the previous three seasons. Roberts, like Allen, has indicated he will rely on a passing offense, which, in a way, brings us back to a discussion of the conference's quarterbacks. So here's a brief, division-by-division rundown of

the Big 12, beginning with quarterbacks...

The North again figures to be the stronger of the divisions, mainly because Nebraska and Colorado should be Top 10 teams. As usual, the Cornhuskers have great expectations, which will depend a great deal on the outcome of their final non-conference game at Washington on Sept. 20.

If Nebraska can get past the Huskies, it should have a fairly clear path to a divisional championship game at Colorado on Nov. 28. But the "if" is big, particularly since the Cornhuskers won't be tested in their first two games at home, against marginal I-A opponents Akron and Central Florida.

Frost has been at Nebraska for two seasons (one as a redshirt) and three springs, so he should have a decent understanding of Tom Osborne's option offense, which is

Doug DeVoe

much more intricate than simply having to decide whether to keep or to pitch the ball to Ahman Green or DeAngelo Evans.

Nebraska lost eight defensive starters, but Wistrom and tackle Jason Peter provide a good foundation on which to build. Besides, a couple of "backups" were just like starters.

If the Cornhuskers falter, Colorado will be there to capitalize. The Buffaloes have a tough non-conference road game of their own, against Michigan on Sept. 13, and they play Texas at Austin. But Neuheisel has shown he's a quick study, by tempering the national championship talk.

For the Buffaloes, silence is golden. "I made a mistake a year ago by stating that our goal was to win the national championship and that we felt it was possible," Neuheisel said in the spring.

"It wasn't the stating of it that was wrong as much as what it did in raising the expectation level early in the season to a level that wasn't realistic. Our goal in 1997 will be to play our best, certainly not as newsworthy as my statement last year, but certainly very true."

Even though Rae Carruth is gone, Hessler isn't without quality receivers. Senior Phil Savoy, honorable mention all-conference last season, could become Colorado's all-time leading receiver.

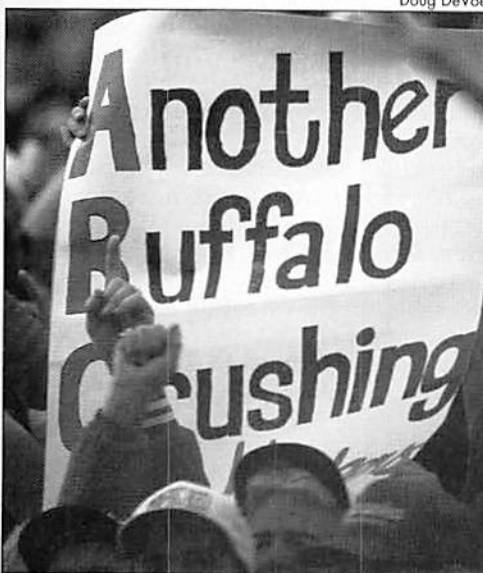
The Buffaloes need to improve their running game and restructure their offensive line. Melvin Thomas is the key to the latter. He's 6-foot-3 and 305 pounds and has run the 40-yard dash in 4.92 seconds.

Matt Russell and Steve Rosga are among the defensive players who must be replaced. Russell was the Butkus Award winner at middle linebacker, and Rosga was an emotional leader at free safety.

Russell's replacement could be incoming freshman Ty Gregorak from Spokane, Wash. That's a long shot, of course, but it's also an indication of how well Neuheisel has recruited.

Beasley is a more mobile quarterback than his predecessors at Kansas State. He's an athletic 6-foot-2, 210 pounds, and he has a strong arm. What he doesn't have is much experience.

The Wildcats' offensive line potentially is better than



Standing in Colorado's path to national prominence once again will be Nebraska, which has owned the series since 1992.

last season's, which was considered the best in Kansas State history. Tackles Todd Weiner and Ryan Young are the best of the best.

Kansas State needs to continue to improve its running game. The Wildcats ranked last in the Big 12 and 75th nationally in rushing offense, and their defense must be rebuilt. Among the raw materials are linebackers Mark Simoneau and Travis Ochs, both of whom are returning starters.

Even though Kansas State has had nine or more victories and played in bowl games each of the last four seasons, there are still those who expect a drop-off in coach Bill Snyder's program.

Nebraska's Osborne is not among them. "Bill Snyder, when you look at college football the last 10 to 15 years, has done as good as, or better, than anyone in a tremendous turnaround," he said before the teams played last season. "This is not a fluke thing. It's a solid program."

What the Wildcats haven't been able to do under Snyder, however, is beat Nebraska or Colorado. They did manage a 16-16 tie with the Buffaloes at Manhattan, Kan., in 1993. But that's been it.

Missouri looks to be the best of

Unless Oklahoma State finds a quarterback, the Cowboys will have trouble staying out of the South basement, let alone winning their marquee game against Oklahoma.

Harry Lentz, Jr.



the rest in the North. The Tigers have an experienced quarterback in junior Corby Jones and an offensive commitment to the run, which enabled them to rank ninth nationally in rushing offense last season. The 6-foot-1, 227-pound Jones was a significant part of that success, rushing for 742 yards — second on the team to Brock Olivo's 749.

The versatile Olivo is among the most under-appreciated players in the Big 12.

Allen brings an up-beat attitude to a Kansas program that needs optimism after losing its best running back (June Henley), its best receiver (Isaac Byrd), its best defender (Ronnie Ward) and its best quarterback (Ben Rutz), all of whom completed their eligibility.

Oh yes, the Jayhawks also lost their best place-kicker when Jeff McCord left a year early to become a minister. And they lost their best offensive lineman, Cleve Roberts, who transferred.

Allen is his own quarterbacks coach, and he has experience in senior Matt Johnner. But Jayhawk hopes rest with Akili Roberson, a transfer from Southwest Community College in Los Angeles.

Iowa State not only must replace Troy Davis, the only

college player to rush for 2,000 yards in consecutive seasons, but also quarterback Todd Doxzon, whose contributions to the Cyclone offense were overshadowed by Davis. Sophomore Darren Davis will try to follow in his brother's footsteps. And junior Todd Bandhauer is the heir apparent to Doxzon, whose running ability complemented Davis.

Of equal concern is a defense that ranked No. 108 nationally last season.

Texas looks to be the class of the South, despite losing All-Americans Bryant Westbrook from the defense and Dan Neil and Pat Fitzgerald from the offense. Brown, who completed 170-of-299 passes for 2,468 yards and 17 touchdowns (with 12 interceptions) last season, is a playmaker, as is Ricky Williams, who moved from fullback to running back in the spring — a mostly semantic move.

Williams rushed for 1,272 yards and 12 touchdowns last season. He can run with the best.

The Longhorns have a new defensive coordinator in Bobby Jack Wright, and a new base defense, the 4-3. Sophomore Aaron Humphrey, the conference Defensive Newcomer of the Year, will be a key to making the 4-3 work. He has moved from outside

Fred Pottorf



linebacker to the middle. Senior nosetackle Chris Akins provides a solid foundation up-front.

Texas also has as good a place-kicker as any team in the conference in Phil Dawson.

If the Longhorns can find reliable receivers to catch Brown's passes and reliable defensive backs to stop opponents from completing passes, they should be in the Big 12 championship again.

Any optimism in Lubbock, Texas, took a serious hit during the Red Raiders' spring intrasquad game when sophomore running back Clint Robertson suffered a knee injury that required reconstructive surgery. Robertson had established himself as the successor to Hanspard.

With an estimated recovery time of eight months, Robertson's status for this season is in serious doubt. In Robertson's absence, redshirted freshman James Easterling and sophomore Anthony Malbrough, who sat out last season for academic reasons, will compete in fall camp for the No. 1 job.

Lethridge, second-team all-conference according to the league coaches a year ago, will have to assume more responsibility in coach Spike Dykes' offense. He passed for 1,686 yards and 11 touchdowns last season, with only

six interceptions. But he also completed only 43.8 percent of his passes.

The Red Raiders get Texas A&M in Lubbock. But they open at Tennessee and play Texas and Nebraska on the road. They don't have much margin for error if they're to finish ahead of A&M.

The Aggies might breeze past Tech, anyway, especially if Stewart plays the way he was expected to play — but didn't — last season. "For you to have a good offensive football team, you have to get execution at the quarterback position, and you particularly have to eliminate mistakes," coach R.C. Slocum said.

Slocum eliminated his offensive and defensive coordinators, as well as his wide receivers coach, the week after the season-ending, 51-15 loss to Texas. A 6-6 record was unacceptable.

A&M has more depth at running back than any team in the conference, including Nebraska. The top four return: Sirr Parker, D'Andre Hardeman, Dante Hall and Eric Bernard. Between them, they rushed for 2,613 yards and 27 touchdowns last season, and none of them is a senior.

The touchdown total was distorted by Hardeman, who scored 17 by rushing and added another on a pass reception. He carried 109 times and caught nine passes, giving him 18 touchdowns on 118 touches. Hardeman scored a touchdown about every seven times he handled the ball from scrimmage.

The Aggies' defensive line must be rebuilt, but linebacker Dat Nguyen returns. The junior from Rockport, Texas, was involved in 146 tackles last season, twice as many as anyone else.

Oklahoma will have to scrap to stay ahead of Baylor and Oklahoma State in the lower division. The Sooners go into the season as they did a year ago, with a quarterback controversy involving junior Eric Moore and sopho-

more Justin Fuente — or vice versa, to be fair about it. Neither has distinguished himself with consistency, and neither completed 50 percent of his passes last season.

Sophomore DeMond Parker, the Big 12 Offensive Freshman of the Year, is a proven offensive threat, after rushing for 1,184 yards and 10 touchdowns in 10 games. And a healthy Stephen Alexander at tight end will be a plus. But the Sooners still need better offensive production.

Oklahoma State has more uncertainty at quarterback than any other team in the division, which is why the Cowboys again will be near the bottom of the South Division. That could change if someone steps up. Among the candidates are sophomore Chris Chaloupka, senior Joe Phears and redshirted freshman Tony Lindsay, in no particular order.

David Thompson is gone. But Andre Richardson and Nathan Simmons return to carry the ball. Alonzo Mayes is as good as any tight end in the country, and the defense has rising stars in linebackers Raymond Cato and Kenyatta Wright to go with versatile defensive back R.W. McQuarters.

Roberts has brought a pro-type passing offense to Baylor. The problem is, the Bears don't have a quarterback with an extensive background in such an offense. Senior Jeff Watson has been an efficient passer, despite an average arm. Junior Jermaine Alfred gained experience last season, after Watson was sidelined by a back injury. And Odell James, whose recruitment was to be the salvation of the program under Reedy, has undergone three knee surgeries and has yet to play a down.

The axiom is: Defense wins championships. That's certainly true. But invariably the quarterback is the focus of championship teams. Consider last year's Big 12 playoff game in St. Louis.

The first name that comes to mind is James Brown. ■

ALL-BIG 12 PRESEASON TEAM

NORTH

SOUTH

OFFENSE

PLAYER	SCHOOL	CL.	POS.	PLAYER	SCHOOL	CL.
Scott Frost	Nebraska	Sr.	QB	James Brown	Texas	Sr.
Brock Olivo	Missouri	Sr.	RB	Ricky Williams	Texas	Jr.
Ahman Green	Nebraska	Jr.	RB	DeMond Parker	Oklahoma	So.
Todd Weiner	Kansas St.	Sr.	OL	Chris Whitney	Texas Tech	Sr.
Aaron Taylor	Nebraska	Sr.	OL	Michael Johnson	Baylor	Sr.
Melvin Thomas	Colorado	Sr.	OL	Ryan Fiebigler	Texas	Sr.
Mike Morris	Missouri	Sr.	OL	Steve McKinney	Texas A&M	Sr.
Eric Anderson	Nebraska	Sr.	OL	Bruce McClure	Oklahoma	Sr.
Jarrett Grosdidier	Kansas St.	Sr.	TE	Alonzo Mayes	Okla. State	Sr.
Ed Williams	Iowa St.	Sr.	WR	Donnie Hart	Texas Tech	Jr.
Phil Savoy	Colorado	Sr.	WR	Wane McGarity	Texas	Jr.
Kris Brown	Nebraska	Jr.	PK	Phil Dawson	Texas	Sr.

DEFENSE

PLAYER	SCHOOL	CL.	POS.	PLAYER	SCHOOL	CL.
Jason Peter	Nebraska	Sr.	DL	Chris Akins	Texas	Sr.
Ryan Olson	Colorado	Sr.	DL	Kelly Gregg	Oklahoma	Jr.
Nick Ziegler	Colorado	Jr.	OLB	Montae Reagor	Texas Tech	Jr.
Grant Wistrom	Nebraska	Sr.	OLB	Gray Mosier	Texas	Jr.
Mark Simoneau	Kansas St.	So.	LB	Raymond Cato	Okla. St.	So.
Ron Merkersen	Colorado	Sr.	LB	Aaron Humphrey	Texas	So.
Jay Foreman	Nebraska	Jr.	LB	Dat Nguyen	Texas A&M	Jr.
Ryan Black	Colorado	Sr.	DB	Rodney Artmore	Baylor	Sr.
Tony Blevins	Kansas	Sr.	DB	Tony Darden	Texas Tech	Jr.
Damen Wheeler	Colorado	So.	DB	Gana Joseph	Oklahoma	Jr.
Ralph Brown	Nebraska	So.	DB	R.W. McQuarters	Okla. St.	Jr.
Jesse Kosch	Nebraska	Sr.	P	Shane Lechler	Texas A&M	So.

NORTH

1. NEBRASKA
2. COLORADO
3. KANSAS ST.
4. MISSOURI
5. KANSAS
6. IOWA ST.

SOUTH

1. TEXAS
2. TEXAS TECH
3. TEXAS A&M
4. OKLAHOMA
5. OKLA. ST.
6. BAYLOR

BIG 12
CHAMPIONSHIP
GAME

TEXAS VS. NEBRASKA

BIG 12 CHAMP

NEBRASKA

RATING THE BIG 12 BY POSITION

QUARTERBACK

1. Texas: Brown feels good.
2. Colorado: Hessler's no rookie.
3. Nebraska: What's a season's experience worth?
4. Texas Tech: Lethridge is a fourth-year starter.
5. Missouri: Jones runs the show.
6. Oklahoma: Fuente and Moore, or Moore and Fuente?
7. Texas A&M: It can't get much worse for Stewart.
8. Baylor: Will James ever play?
9. Kansas St.: Maybe Beasley, and maybe not.
10. Kansas: Allen coaches the position.
11. Iowa St.: No Bandhauer bandwagon yet.
12. Oklahoma St.: Tiger, Tiger burning bright. . .

DEFENSIVE LINE

1. Nebraska: Wistrom, Peter among the best ever.
2. Colorado: Olson . . . and lots of experience.
3. Texas: Young guys took their lumps last season.
4. Texas Tech: Reagor a big-play defender.
5. Oklahoma: Tackles solid, but what about the ends?
6. Kansas St.: Evans provides solid foundation.
7. Missouri: If Cracraft were only bigger.
8. Texas A&M: Significant drop-off from last season.
9. Oklahoma St.: Welcome back, Williams.
10. Kansas: For starters, Dercher must regain frosh form.
11. Iowa St.: Not Big 12's worst, but No. 104 nationally.
12. Baylor: Big 12's worst against the run, again.

RUNNING BACK

1. Texas A&M: Four who rushed for 500-plus yards.
2. Nebraska: With everyone healthy, could be the best.
3. Oklahoma: Parker gets help this season.
4. Texas: Williams among the nation's best.
5. Colorado: More two-back sets in the fall.
6. Kansas St.: Last in Big 12 rushing last season.
7. Oklahoma St.: Richardson finally gets his turn.
8. Missouri: Overlooked Olivo does it all.
9. Baylor: Small, but mighty?
10. Kansas: Replacing Henley no easy task.
11. Iowa St.: One Davis succeeds another.
12. Texas Tech: Turmoil following injury to Robertson.

LINEBACKER

1. Kansas St.: Oh brother, Simoneau and Ochs.
2. Oklahoma St.: Cato and Wright keep busy.
3. Texas: Humphrey covers sideline to sideline.
4. Colorado: Freshman Gregorak in the middle.
5. Nebraska: Formidable Foreman sets the pace.
6. Texas A&M: Nguyen a proven winner.
7. Oklahoma: That's Mr. Smith to you.
8. Kansas: Sharpe emerged in spring.
9. Missouri: Nondescript and inexperienced.
10. Iowa St.: Maybe better than No. 10, but not much.
11. Texas Tech: Butler, but then who?
12. Baylor: Littleton does more than deep snap.

RECEIVER

1. Colorado: Cupboard's not bare.
2. Iowa St.: Williams and Watley . . . enough said.
3. Oklahoma St.: Mayes can shag them.
4. Nebraska: Bigger and faster than ever.
5. Texas: Mostly new, but solid.
6. Texas A&M: Great in practice, but . . .
7. Oklahoma: Alexander must stay healthy.
8. Kansas St.: Has potential, but unproven.
9. Texas Tech: Big 12's worst completion percentage.
10. Missouri: H-back sets added in the spring.
11. Kansas: Allen's teams have thrown well.
12. Baylor: Roberts wants to throw like BYU.

SECONDARY

1. Texas Tech: Darden is Big 12's Deion.
2. Oklahoma: They shall not pass.
3. Colorado: Always bet on Black.
4. Nebraska: Newcomers to get a chance.
5. Oklahoma St.: Three starters return.
6. Kansas: Blevins a fourth-year starter.
7. Baylor: Ray of sunshine in the gloom.
8. Missouri: Reinstatement of Criss should help.
9. Texas: What a difference a year makes.
10. Texas A&M: (See Iowa State linebackers).
11. Kansas St.: Canty loss costly.
12. Iowa St.: Frosh Avey could be the best.

OFFENSIVE LINE

1. Nebraska: Taylor back where he belongs.
2. Colorado: Switches ease losses.
3. Kansas St.: Best interior ever?
4. Missouri: Morris leads the way.
5. Texas: Solid up front, but unspectacular.
6. Texas A&M: (See Texas offensive line).
7. Oklahoma: Optimism abounds.
8. Texas Tech: "House" Gray a big factor.
9. Iowa St.: Size and experience are lacking.
10. Kansas: Quarterback better be mobile.
11. Oklahoma St.: Experience is worth something.
12. Baylor: Return of Davis helps some.

KICKING GAME

1. Nebraska: Experience and emphasis.
2. Texas: Dawson's leg a difference-maker.
3. Oklahoma St.: Will get plenty of playing time.
4. Texas Tech: Two place-kickers with 50-yard range.
5. Kansas St.: Gramatica's back.
6. Texas A&M: Probably should be higher.
7. Colorado: Woeful inconsistency.
8. Oklahoma: Liability last year.
9. Iowa St.: Frosh Gomez to punt?
10. Missouri: Frosh Sproull to place-kick?
11. Baylor: It's Atteberry II.
12. Kansas: More pressing problems need attention.

	Iowa State	Kansas St.	Colorado	Kansas	Missouri	Nebraska
8-30	Oklahoma State			UA Birmingham Aug. 28		Akron
9-6	@ Wyoming	@ N. Illinois	Colorado St.	TCU	Eastern Michigan	
9-13	@ Minnesota	Ohio	@ Michigan	Missouri	@ Kansas	Central Florida
9-20	Iowa			@ Cincinnati	@ Tulsa	@ Washington
9-27		Bowling Green	Wyoming		Ohio State	
10-4	@ Missouri	@ Nebraska	Texas A&M	Oklahoma	Iowa State	Kansas St.
10-11	@ Texas A&M	Missouri	@ Oklahoma St.	@ Texas Tech	@ Kansas State	@ Baylor
10-18		Texas A&M	Kansas	@ Colorado	Texas	Texas Tech
10-25	Baylor	@ Oklahoma	@ Texas	Nebraska	@ Oklahoma State	@ Kansas
11-1	@ Kansas	@ Texas Tech	Missouri	Iowa State	@ Colorado	Oklahoma
11-8	Colorado	Kansas	@ Iowa St.	@ Kansas State	Nebraska	@ Missouri
11-15	@ Nebraska	Colorado	@ Kansas St.	@ Texas	Baylor	Iowa St.
11-22	Kansas State	@ Iowa St.				
11-28			Nebraska			@ Colorado
12-6	Dr. Pepper Big 12 Conference Championship • Alamodome • San Antonio, Texas					

	Baylor	Texas A&M	Texas Tech	Oklahoma St.	Oklahoma	Texas
8-30	Miami, Fla.		@ Tennessee	@ Iowa State	vs. Northwestern\$ Aug. 23	
9-6	@ Fresno State	Sam Houston St.		@ SW Louisiana	Syracuse	Rutgers
9-13			SW Louisiana	Fresno State		UCLA
9-20	@ Michigan	SW Louisiana	North Texas		@ California	
9-27		vs. North Texas%		Northeast Louisiana	Louisville	@ Rice
10-4	Texas Tech	@ Colorado	@ Baylor	Texas	@ Kansas	@ Oklahoma St.
10-11	Nebraska	Iowa St.	Kansas	Colorado	vs. Texas&	vs. Oklahoma&
10-18	@ Oklahoma	@ Kansas St.	@ Nebraska		Baylor	@ Missouri
10-25	@ Iowa State	@ Texas Tech	Texas A&M	Missouri	Kansas St.	Colorado
11-1	Texas	Oklahoma St.	Kansas State	@ Texas A&M	@ Nebraska	@ Baylor
11-8	@ Texas A&M	Baylor	@ Texas	@ Oklahoma	Oklahoma St.	Texas Tech
11-15	@ Missouri	@ Oklahoma	@ Oklahoma St.	Texas Tech	Texas A&M	Kansas
11-22	Oklahoma State		Oklahoma	@ Baylor	@ Texas Tech	
11-28		Texas				@ Texas A&M
12-6	Dr. Pepper Big 12 Conference Championship • Alamodome • San Antonio, Texas					

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- ➔ 47. TEXAS - Horns Illustrated 20 issues, \$37.95
- 48. TEXAS A&M - Aggies Illustrated 17 magazines, \$42.90
- 49. TEXAS TECH - Red Raider Sports 16 issues, \$34.90
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COLORADO

Colorado entered the spring facing with a daunting rebuilding process. After losing 10 starters — four on defense and six on offense — Rick Neuheisel and his staff knew the manner in which the team answered its questions this spring would lay the foundation for how successful the Buffs will be during the 1997 campaign. • One of the biggest concerns centered squarely on the shoulder's of the player who would replace Koy Detmer at quarterback. Senior John Hessler was terrific this spring, but as much as he has progressed, Jerry Weisinger's progress was the most pleasant surprise, and should again give CU solid depth behind center. • After an inauspicious debut last season, Weisinger has finally begun to blossom.

2nd
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"He's (Hessler) improved with his pocket sense, though he's still not there yet," Neuheisel said "But he has certainly improved and I think his decision making has all been good and certainly his understanding of our offense has evolved greatly so I think he's going to be fine."

Without a doubt, Hessler came into the spring as the favorite to replace Detmer, with Weisinger figuring in as his backup. With the spring completed, nothing has changed; Hessler is still the man.

Often chided as not being a practice player, the Brighton, Colo., native took the off-season seriously, reporting in great physical shape and with a renewed emphasis on preparing for the upcoming season. Hessler was the savior of the 1995 season after Detmer went down with a knee injury, but he got it done more with his instincts and athletic ability than by playing within the offense.

This spring, Hessler has played more like a true quarterback. He still has the great long ball that he's always displayed, but now he's throwing the medium- and short-ranged passes with a more deft touch.

"John has been terrific," Rick Neuheisel said. "He's done everything we've asked and every day he learns a little more."

While no player may stand out as much as Rae Carruth did last year, there will be better overall talent, including Phil Savoy (left) at receiver.

I think he's going to be really good."

In order to secure depth at the center position, starting left tackle Andrew Welsh split his spring at both tackle and center. A permanent move to the middle could depend on how center Adam Reed continues to develop and on how quickly JUCO tackle Brad Bedell picks up the offense in the fall. Melvin Thomas' move to right guard has been so successful that guard and center coach Terry Lewis feels CU won't have any drop off there, quite a compliment considering "MT" is replacing All-American Chris Naeole.

The development of young tackles Ryan Johanningmeier and Shane Cook has gone a long way toward calming the coaches' worries about the tackle position. Cook (6-7, 290) is more physically dominating, while Johanningmeier (6-7, 275) is more technically sound at this point. This battle should rage on into the fall, with one player starting and the other acting as CU's sixth man.

Lewis has a theory — an offense is only as good as it is strong up the middle. So the veteran of trench warfare made a point of solidifying the interior of CU's line after losing both starting guards from a year ago. "I want to be very experienced, or as experienced as I can be, up the middle," Lewis said. "And I realize we are as strong as we can be up the middle right now with the moves we've made."

Tennyson McCarty, CU's top tight end and a possible starter in the fall, missed the whole spring recovering from toe

STRENGTHS:

Colorado will be both deep and talented at the skill positions, especially wide receiver and running back. No other team in the conference comes close at either position.

WEAKNESSES:

After losing middle line-backer Matt Russell, last season's Dick Butkus Award winner, the Buffs won't be able to hide how small their defensive tackles are this year. Ryan Olson and Viliami Maumau are generously listed at 265 and 280 respectively.

surgery. He should be fine by the fall.

The starting role won't be decided until the fall, when a healthy McCarty will battle Brody Heffner. Heffner, a good receiving threat last season, spent the spring improving his blocking. His progress, as well as the development of depth, were the most important things to come out of spring.

At running back it was a case of good and bad news.

Darren Fisk broke his hand missing the final practice and spring game. Tavon Cooper suffered a knee injury missing the final week. And Marlon Barnes missed the last half of spring with an ankle sprain.

Lendon Henry is running even stronger than before. The "L-train" is making a better-than-ever case for the starting job. Also,

Barnes was looking impressive until his injury.

The injuries to the fullbacks came late in the month and didn't really hurt CU's efforts with the two-back set. But the picture at tailback remains murky. Henry's the strongest runner, Herchell Troutman is the most productive back, Dwayne Cherrington is a burner with moves and Barnes is a burner with power.

Wide receiver Phil Savoy's pulled hamstring kept him out of almost all of spring ball.

Marcus Stiggers moves from the slot to the "Z" receiver, where he's battling Ryan Nunez for the starting role. Chris Anderson moved from split end to the slot where he's running behind Darrin Chiaverini.

Stiggers looked much like James Kidd — small, but blazing fast and with can't-miss hands. Also, redshirt-freshman Javon Green was impressive and should make a run at some playing time. Anderson showed extra effort this spring. After one catch where he had to reach up and make a great grab, the entire offensive coaching staff broke into applause.

The depth at all three receiving spots will be a real strength for next season. While no player may stand out as much as Rae Carruth did last year, there will be better overall talent available.

Second-string defensive tackle Sean Jarne missed the entire spring with a broken foot, but is expected to make a full recovery and should begin running again some time in July.

One can't underestimate Jarne's absence from spring practices. At 6-6, 275 he is the only true "war daddy" CU has in the middle of its defense, and the Buffs will really need him to develop quickly in the fall to provide size — and depth — on the line.

No major surprises at tackle, with starters Viliami Maumau and Ryan Olson continuing to exert their dominance in spite of their lack of size. The only question surrounds the second-string unit — only Aaron Marshall really proved over spring ball that he can contribute — and it remains to be seen if CU will have quality depth in the interior.

Projected defensive end starter Fred Jones missed the entire spring with a torn ACL (suffered before practices began) and the earliest he could return now looks to be midseason.

Not since the days of the H-boys (Alfred Williams and Kanavis McGhee) has CU had a more complete package of size, strength and speed on the outside. In Terrell Cade and Nick Ziegler, the Buffs have a pair of mean, aggressive starters who won't want to come off the field.

Cade's switch back to end prompted linebackers coach Brian Cabral to move Mike Phillips into the middle, and it paid off much better than anyone could have imagined.

Of the three linebacking positions (strong, middle, weak) only the strong is settled, with Ron Merkerson poised for a stellar senior season and Brandon Southward now capable of contributing effectively as a backup. When fall camp begins Cabral will have to determine if Phillips (currently No. 1) or Peters starts in the middle, and if true frosh Ty Gregorak is ready to handle the No. 2 spot there. The most likely scenario: Phillips starts at middle, Peters moves to weak and backs up Hannibal Navies, and Gregorak is rushed into

duty behind Phillips.

As planned, Marcus Washington missed spring ball as he recovers from shoulder surgery, but will be ready for next season. Ryan Black pulled a hamstring in the first week of practices and sat out for the remainder of the spring. Also, Elton Davis suffered a pulled hamstring and was forced to the sidelines for the latter portion of the month. Both Davis and Black are expected to recover shortly after a few weeks of rest and rehab.

With Washington and Davis missing significant time due to injuries, young cornerbacks Damen Wheeler and Ben Kelly took full advantage of their opportunities and really impressed coaches this spring. Wheeler proved himself the best corner on the team, while Kelly showed that he's got enough ability to compete for the other starting spot next fall. Both are a bit small, but have outstanding speed and surprising toughness for players their size.

"I would hope that the learning curve will become more vertical as we enter year three in both our offensive and defensive systems," Neuheisel said. "We've stayed pretty consistent in what we've tried to both teach and accomplish, with just a few minor adjustments. Hopefully, the kids will know what to do with a reckless abandon." ■ — John VonSchrader

Colorado wonders if Jon Hessler can perform the same heroics as a full-time starter that he showed in 1995 when he saved the Buff season.

Jon Waller



BUFFS AT A GLANCE

RICK NEUFELDER



University of Colorado/Sports Information



CU'S KEYS TO SUCCESS

SECONDARY GREEN

On offense, John Hessler must continue to progress and the line needs to gel. Defensively, how fast CU's talented, but green, secondary improves could be more important than the development of a middle linebacker.

RUSHING TO IMPROVE

The Buffs were 11th in the Big 12 Conference rushing the ball last year, gaining just 148.6 yards per game. That weak performance necessitated CU's work this spring with more two-back sets.

KELLY HERO

Redshirt freshman Ben Kelly made waves all spring, both at cornerback and on special teams. The Cleveland native blocked three field goals in scrimmages and returned the opening kickoff of the spring game 97 yards for a touchdown. Three plays later he intercepted John Hessler. Kelly could be the player Colorado needs to add that spark late in game — a factor they didn't enjoy last year.

1996 RESULTS

10-2

CONFERENCE FINISH: 7-1 (2nd North)

A 31	Washington State	W, 37-19
S 7	@ Colorado State	W, 48-34
S 14	Michigan	L, 13-20
S 28	@ Texas A&M	W, 24-10
O 12	Oklahoma State	W, 35-13
O 19	@ Kansas	W, 20-7
O 26	Texas	W, 28-24
N 2	@ Missouri	W, 41-13
N 9	Iowa State	W, 49-42
N 16	Kansas State	W, 12-0
N 29	@ Nebraska	L, 12-17
D 30	vs. Washington*	W, 33-21

* Holiday Bowl • San Diego, Calif.

TOP RETURNERS

RUSHING	Gms.	Att.	Yds.	YPC	YPG	TD
Troutman, H.	10	193	804	4.2	80.4	4
Henry, L.	10	115	539	4.7	53.9	6
Cherrington, D.	10	28	168	6.0	16.8	1
Fisk, D.	11	7	19	2.7	1.9	0
Weisinger, J.	2	5	15	3.0	5.0	0
Barnes, M.	1	3	3	1.0	3.0	0

PASSING	Gms.	Att.	Yds.	YPC	YPG	TD
Hessler, J.	5	23-12-1	174	3.4	0	0
Weisinger, J.	2	4-1-1	8	4.0	0	0

RECEIVING	Gms.	Rec.	Yds.	YPC	YPG	TD
Savoy, P.	11	43	652	15.2	59.3	3
Heffner, B.	11	20	288	14.4	26.2	2
Troutman, H.	10	18	207	11.5	20.7	2
McCarty, T.	11	12	87	7.3	7.9	0

1997 SCHEDULE

Sept. 6	Colorado State
Sept. 13	@ Michigan
Sept. 27	Wyoming
Oct. 4	Texas A&M
Oct. 11	@ Oklahoma State
Oct. 18	Kansas
Oct. 25	@ Texas
Nov. 1	Missouri
Nov. 8	@ Iowa State
Nov. 15	@ Kansas State
Nov. 28	Nebraska

COLORADO TENTATIVE DEPTH CHART (FOLLOWING SPRING DRILLS)

WR 80 Phil Savoy	6-3	205	Sr.	DE 48 Terrell Cade	6-4	245	Jr.
17 Robert Toler	6-0	195	So.	80 Ian Loper	6-4	240	Fr.
LT 74 Andrew Welsh	6-6	295	Sr.	NT 55 Ryan Olson	6-2	275	Sr.
72 Shane Cook	6-7	290	So.	90 Aaron Marshall	6-4	270	Jr.
LG 75 Aaron Wade	6-7	300	Sr.	DT 77 Viliami Maumau	6-2	290	Sr.
70 Ben Nichols	6-6	285	Sr.	94 Sean Jarne	6-6	275	So.
C 53 Adam Reed	6-2	285	Jr.	DE 57 Nick Ziegler	6-5	230	Jr.
74 Andrew Welsh	6-6	295	Sr.	98 Jesse Warren	6-5	240	So.
RG 78 Melvin Thomas	6-3	305	Sr.	WLB 8 Hannibal Navies	6-3	240	Jr.
73 Kane Cullum	6-5	290	So.	46 Wes Pratt	6-5	220	Fr.
RT 72 Shane Cook	6-7	290	So.	MLB 91 Mike Phillips	6-4	215	Sr.
-or- 58 Ryan Johanningmeier	6-7	275	So.	44 Clifton Peters	6-2	240	Jr.
TE 41 Tennyson McCarty	6-3	245	Sr.	SLB 33 Ron Merkerson	6-3	250	Sr.
-or- 86 Brody Heffner	6-5	230	So.	66 Brandon Southward	6-4	235	Jr.
WR 2 Marcus Stiggers	5-7	175	So.	LC 4 Toray Davis	5-9	190	Sr.
15 Eric McCready	6-4	195	Fr.	37 Marcus Washington	6-2	210	Jr.
QB 7 John Hessler	6-2	200	Sr.	SS 6 Ryan Black	5-10	200	Sr.
1 Jeremy Weisinger	6-2	200	So.	40 Rashidi Barnes	6-0	195	So.
TB 5 Herchell Troutman	5-7	190	Sr.	FS 36 Ryan Sutter	6-2	205	Sr.
39 Lendon Henry	6-0	210	Sr.	26 John Sanders	5-10	175	Fr.
WR 6 Darrin Chiaverini	6-2	195	Jr.	RC 2 Damen Wheeler	5-10	165	So.
18 Chris Anderson	6-4	215	Sr.	1 Ben Kelly	5-10	175	Fr.
PK 9 Jeremy Aldrich	5-10	165	So.	P 47 Nick Pietsch	6-0	170	So.

Players with starting experience in bold



KANSAS ST.

In this era of offensive explosiveness, Kansas State is, by comparison, a dud. • The Big 12 was the third-highest scoring conference in the country last season behind the WAC and Pac-10, averaging a combined 54 points in league games. Kansas State was ninth in the Big 12 with a combined 44.8 points per game. While four Big 12 teams were among the top 25 in total offense, K-State was 86th nationally and last in the conference. • None of this should imply that the Wildcats have been a flop. K-State is one of just six programs to win at least nine games each year since 1993. • Kansas State played in the school's first New Year's Day bowl last season, and the defense is typically one of the nation's finest.

3rd
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But when a program reaches those levels, the next step sometimes looks like a sheer cliff.

"I think we need to be a more physical offense than we demonstrated this past year," K-State coach Bill Snyder said. "There are some obvious examples of when we weren't the type of physical football team that we needed to be."

Exhibit "A" is the 19-15 Cotton Bowl loss to BYU. The Wildcats were pushed around by the smaller and more savvy Cougars most of the afternoon.

K-State actually was outrushed by pass-happy BYU that day, 59 yards to 41. If that game sounded an alarm in the K-State football offices, it was hard to hear. Giddy Wildcat fans are expecting the school's fifth bowl game in a row. The fact that some are calling it a rebuilding year won't stop Snyder.

"We won't make reference to it," Snyder said. "It's true that we will be a young football team."

The future is now inside the walls of the Vanier Football Complex. Snyder went heavy on junior college transfers in recruiting. Twelve of the 27 players in the class — 44 percent — are JUCOs. That's a risky recruiting philosophy that could pay off for a program that is thin at key

positions.

KSU returns 10 starters — six offense, four defense — from a 9-3 squad that finished third in the Big 12 North at 6-2. Snyder is breaking in a new quarterback, new receivers and a mostly-new starting secondary.

Offense, it seems, must be a priority. The Wildcats averaged only 136 yards per game on the ground. That's not an embarrassing number, but in the grinding Big 12, there are tough yards to be picked up inside the red zone.

K-State's rushing shortcomings might be all that separated it from Nebraska and Colorado. Colorado held K-State to 65 rushing yards in a 12-0 victory. Texas Tech limited it to minus-12 rushing yards. Nebraska barely let K-State have the ball, snapping it an amazing 85 times in a 39-3 victory at Manhattan.

"If we run the ball better, then we probably will run the ball more," Snyder said. "We have not been able to do what we've wanted to do. We've had to throw the ball more. We lost a game in Dallas because we were unable to run the ball effectively the way we want to run it."

There have been suggestions that the offense hasn't produced because it is complicated to learn.

"The offense is complicated," quarterback Jonathan Beasley said. "You've got to study around the clock in this offense. If you take a day off, then you're hurting yourself."

K-State hurt itself frequently last season with numerous audibles at the line of

STRENGTHS:

No matter how much you analyze it, debate it or deny it, K-State is destined to win at least nine games this season and go to a bowl game. That's the way it's been the past four seasons, and that's just fine with Wildcat fans.

WEAKNESSES:

Snyder typically schedules weak non-conference teams in order to pick up easy victories. While this is a solid way to pad the record, KSU shouldn't start crying when the pollsters all but ignore them and they aren't ranked high enough for an Alliance bowl at the end of the season.

Senior Mike Lawrence was the KSU workhorse last season when he finished 18 yards shy of 1,000.

scrimmage. In the Cotton Bowl, the ball was snapped with five or fewer seconds left on the play clock several times. That puts even more pressure on the quarterback to execute.

Snyder didn't stand pat. Offensive coordinator Ron Hudson was dispatched to UCLA to take a look at the Bruins' scheme. The biggest reason for the lack of productivity might have been the absence of 1995 rushing leader Eric Hickson. Hickson, now a senior, missed all of 1996 with a broken leg, leaving most of the workhorse duty to senior Mike Lawrence, who came within 18 yards of a 1,000-yard season.

When Hickson and Lawrence split time in 1995, K-State had one of the best rushing seasons in its history.

Doug DeVoe



Beasley, a sophomore, had better win the job. He is the only quarterback letterman on the roster, despite having thrown only 19 passes in 1996. If Beasley doesn't pan out, Michael Bishop might be the safety net. The 6-foot-3, 195-pound transfer from Blinn (Texas) Community College was the No. 2-rated JUCO quarterback in the country.

The Wildcats might be breathing easier if JUCO transfer Cody Lee Smith had ever panned out. Since arriving in 1995, Smith has battled a rare stomach disorder that keeps him from digesting food. The NCAA granted Smith a rare sixth-year of eligibility because of the sickness, but by the end of spring drills he had yet to be a factor. In two junior college seasons, Smith threw for 4,700 yards and 38 touchdowns.

"It doesn't do any good to worry about it," Snyder said. "We're going to play with

what we have."

K-State types are calling Ryan Young (6-6, 320) and Todd Weiner (6-5, 280) the best pair of tackles in the league. Both were third-team All-Big 12 last year. The best lineman, however, might be center Kendyl Jacox. He makes the move to snapper after starting seven games at right guard.

"Size-wise, we're going to be bigger on offense than at any time since I've been here," Snyder said. "That's not just offensive linemen either. We also have a chance to be bigger and more physical at wide receiver and we've got a good-sized fullback."

Receiver depth took a giant hit when senior Andre Anderson was kicked off the team for undisclosed reasons on April 24. Anderson was thought to be about ready to blossom. He was second on the squad with five touchdown catches last season, and had an impressive Cotton Bowl. His Hail Mary catch for a touchdown against BYU will go down in Wildcat lore.

Anderson's dismissal came after all-time Big Eight receiving leader Kevin Lockett completed his career and headed to the NFL.

The remaining receivers will have to make a name for themselves because they are unknowns going in. The returning Wildcats combined for exactly three catches last season.

Junior Troy Hackney had two of those, so he understandably is penciled in as one of the starters. SMU transfer DeAndrea Robinson is expected to play a lot, although he is only 5-7 and 145. JUCO transfer Everett Burnett averaged 18 yards per catch last season for Kemper (Mo.) Military Academy.

Defense hasn't been a problem for Snyder lately. Two seasons ago he had the top-ranked unit in the country.

The last thing the veteran-starved receiving corps needed was the loss of senior Andre Anderson who was kicked off the team in April.

Last year, it "slipped" to 16th.

The secondary has been hit the hardest. All-American Chris Canty left a year early for the NFL. Fellow cornerback Joe Gordon completed his eligibility, as did free safety Mario Smith. Together they allowed only 42 percent of

opponent's passes to be completed, best in the Big 12.

Senior cornerback Demetric Denmark and sophomore free safety Lamar Chapman played extensively last year. Chapman, however, must get over being beaten for BYU's game-winning touchdown.

Look for K-State's defensive MVP to be a linebacker. Junior linebacker Travis Ochs was third-team All-Big 12. Fellow linebacker Mark Simoneau was the Big 12 Freshman Defensive Player of the Year. The two combined for 189 tackles and 6.5 sacks.

The key for the offense is to not stand around and admire the KSU defense. It must complement it.

"At times, the defense has always been there for us," Lawrence said. "We need to get in the frame of mind of

going out and putting teams away." ■ — Dennis Dodd

The offense is complicated. You've got to study around the clock in this offense. If you take a day off, then you're hurting yourself.

**— Jonathan Beasley
KSU quarterback**



Doug DeVoe

WILDCATS AT A GLANCE

KSU'S KEYS TO SUCCESS

QB QUANDARY

Breaking in a new quarterback is always a dicey situation. Jonathan Beasley threw 19 passes last season. Bill Snyder depends on a cerebral signal-caller who makes good decisions.

SCORING DROUGHT

Despite its offensive inadequacies, K-State was third in Big 12 scoring with 29.5 points per game. However, the Wildcats scored three times on interceptions and punt returns. Take away those 18 points and KSU averaged 25.5 points, eighth in the Big 12 and tied for 53rd in the country.

JUCO DILEMMA

K-State has looked to the JUCOs for quick help. This method of recruitment can either kill or immediately propel a team. Milton Proctor, a freshman defensive back from St. Louis, was highly-coveted by Missouri, Nebraska and Colorado. With key losses in the secondary, Proctor needs to show his skills right away.

1996 RESULTS

9-3
CONFERENCE FINISH: 6-2 (3rd North)

A 31	Texas Tech	W, 21-14
S 7	Indiana State	W, 59-3
S 14	Cincinnati	W, 35-0
S 21	@ Rice	W, 34-7
O 5	Nebraska	L, 3-39
O 12	@ Missouri	W, 35-10
O 19	@ Texas A&M	W, 23-20
O 26	Oklahoma	W, 42-35
N 9	@ Kansas	W, 38-12
N 16	@ Colorado	L, 0-12
N 23	Iowa State	W, 35-20
J 1	vs. Brigham Young*	L, 15-19

* Southwestern Bell Cotton Bowl • Dallas, Texas

TOP RETURNERS

RUSHING	Gms.	Att.	Yds.	YPC	YPG	TD
Lawrence, M.	11	209	982	4.7	89.3	10
Charles, M.	10	102	484	4.7	48.4	6
Beasley, J.	8	24	91	3.8	11.4	0
Goolsby, B.	11	19	63	3.3	5.7	2

PASSING	Gms.	Att.	Cp-Int	Yds.	YPG	TD
Beasley, J.	8	19	8-1	118	14.8	1

RECEIVING	Gms.	Rec.	Yds.	YPC	YPG	TD
Lawrence, M.	11	27	173	6.4	15.7	0
Anderson, A.	11	23	309	13.4	28.1	5
Grosdidier, J.	11	15	187	12.5	17.0	3
Swift, J.	8	5	63	12.6	7.9	0
Charles, M.	10	5	18	3.6	1.8	0
Hackney, T.	5	2	71	35.5	14.2	1
Goolsby, B.	11	2	11	5.5	1.0	1

1997 SCHEDULE

Sept. 6	@ Northern Illinois
Sept. 13	Ohio
Sept. 27	Bowling Green
Oct. 4	@ Nebraska
Oct. 11	Missouri
Oct. 18	Texas A&M
Oct. 25	@ Oklahoma
Nov. 1	@ Texas Tech
Nov. 8	Kansas
Nov. 15	Colorado
Nov. 22	@ Iowa State

KANSAS STATE TENTATIVE DEPTH CHART (FOLLOWING SPRING DRILLS)

WR	88	Troy Hackney	6-1	200	Jr.	DE	53	Mike Bush	6-3	230	Jr.
	83	Everett Burnett	6-3	195	Jr.		96	Nilijah McCoy	6-4	275	Jr.
LT	75	Todd Weiner	6-5	280	Sr.	DT	77	Damion McIntosh	6-5	290	So.
	63	Ryan Cummings	6-5	275	Fr.		91	Ben Jimenez	6-2	260	So.
LG	79	Jeremy Martin	6-3	300	Jr.	DT	98	Jerome Evans	6-6	305	Sr.
	60	Mike Munson	6-3	300	Jr.		46	Joe Bob Clements	6-3	245	Jr.
C	74	Kendyl Jacox	6-2	320	Sr.	DE	49	Darren Howard	6-4	235	So.
	69	Brian Nabours	6-3	270	Jr.		43	Travis Litton	6-3	215	So.
RG	93	Ian Moses	6-4	290	So.	LB	50	Travis Ochs	6-3	225	Jr.
	65	David McIntyre	6-2	300	Jr.		5	David Conley	6-2	200	Jr.
RT	76	Ryan Young	6-6	320	Jr.	LB	41	Turelle Williams	6-2	220	So.
	59	Grant Reves	6-6	290	Fr.		51	Casey Wehrman	6-1	210	Sr.
TE	82	Jarrett Grosdidier	6-5	250	Sr.	LB	42	Mark Simoneau	6-0	225	So.
	86	Justin Swift	6-4	245	Jr.		32	Derek King	5-10	195	Jr.
QB	18	Jonathan Beasley	6-2	210	So.	CB	29	Demetric Denmark	5-9	175	Sr.
		Michael Bishop	6-3	195	Jr.		35	Dyshod Carter	5-11	170	Fr.
RB	20	Mike Lawrence	5-10	190	Sr.	FS	17	Lamar Chapman	6-1	175	So.
	24	Eric Hickson	5-10	195	Sr.		14	Lin Dotson	6-0	185	So.
FB	30	Brian Goolsby	6-3	245	Jr.	SS	9	Monty Spiller	6-0	185	Sr.
	27	Matt Gangwish	5-11	225	Sr.		40	Jarrod Cooper	6-2	200	Fr.
WR	85	DeAndrae Robinson	5-7	145	Jr.	CB	2	Keith Black	5-10	180	Jr.
	84	Brian Jackson	6-0	180	Jr.		34	Adrian Beard	5-9	170	Fr.
PK	15	Jamie Rheem	6-3	165	So.	P	16	James Garcia	6-2	195	Jr.

Players with starting experience in bold



MISSOURI

Dreams have turned into expectations in victory-starved Columbia, Mo. • When asked whether the "B-word" — bowl — had been whispered around the Missouri football program this preseason, quarterback Corby Jones practically grabbed a megaphone. "You can say it," Jones said. "We're already saying it. We're going to be great. The only thing that's going to stop us is us. I don't think there's anyone who can really stop us." • Big talk for a program which hasn't had a winning season since another well-known Tiger — Woods — was in the first grade. • Jones was referring to the team in general, but also to the offense (which averaged 25.3 points per game last season) that is expected to carry it.

4th
NORTH
DIVISION

He is also speaking of the program that has lumbered through 13 consecutive losing seasons; the team that allowed the most points (376) in coach Larry Smith's college career; the squad that won two games in overtime and another by a point when Southern Methodist missed a chip-shot field goal at the gun.

But after 13 years of suffering, the Tigers believe they are out of the woods.

The Tigers, 5-6 overall and 3-5 in the Big 12 last season, return eight starters on offense and six on defense. But the team centers around Jones, a fiery junior who was the leading rusher among quarterbacks in the Big 12 last season (742 yards). The fact that he has, so far, shown an erratic arm is a nagging point for a program ready to take off.

Columbia was bursting at the seams when the Jones-led Tigers ran over Kansas 42-25, in the season finale last November. Jones broke out that day with 289 yards in total offense, once again raising comparisons to Missouri's all-time total offense leader, Phil Bradley. The victory meant that the 5-6 record was Missouri's best in nine years. One of the Memorial Stadium goalposts was ripped down and found its way to a local watering hole for dissec-

Quarterback Corby Jones may be an offensive liability through the air, but there's no doubting his ability to get it done on the ground.

STRENGTHS:

The Tigers have one of the most explosive and productive backfields in the nation. Last year Missouri ranked ninth nationally after averaging 250.7 yards a game.

WEAKNESSES:

There were only four healthy linebackers coming out of the spring. Freshman sensation Barry Odom (No. 3 freshman tackler in the Big 12) tore an ACL in the spring and may not play in 1997.

Expect opposing offenses to test the soft, tender underbelly of the Tigers — the front seven — early and often.

tion.

The giddiness should continue this season — at least for the offense. It's fun to watch, though not in the typical WAC sense of things. Jones is no pocket passer.

"I think Coach Smith is better about it (letting Jones improvise in the backfield) than a lot of coaches would be because he understands the way I play," Jones said. "Sometimes he doesn't agree with it. But he knows that more times than not I'm going to make something good happen."

There is a hint of confidence, perhaps even cockiness, in Jones' tone. For the first time in his career, he is the unabashed starting quarterback. Kent Skornia and John McArthur transferred out of the program in the off-season for just that reason.

"Someone asked me before (spring) practice, 'How does it feel? How does it feel?' Does it mean not having anyone look over your shoulder?" Jones said. "Actually, I was a little more relaxed. I wasn't worried about what everyone else was doing. I was worried about my throws."

Now, if Jones screws up what's the worst that can happen? An interception? A punt? He's still going out there for the next series.

Jones is improving as a passer in small increments. His .514 completion percentage produced 624 yards in 1996. That compared to 134 yards and only a 33.3 percent completion rate as a freshman.

In the final three games of last season Jones seemed to come of age as a pass/run threat. He completed 64 percent

of his passes and averaged 146 yards in total offense in those games. In the spring he threw for almost 60 percent.

"This is a big year for me," Jones said. "I came a long way last year. This is a big year because people are gunning for us. People aren't going to be thinking that I can't run or I can't do this or I can't do that."

That, however, was a perception when Jones meekly began his career midway through the 1995 season. Injuries had forced the freshman into the lineup against Nebraska. To save his quarterback's body and his team's psyche, Smith designed the offense that day to be more conservative than the 700 Club.

The Tigers slinked out of town with their requisite 57-0 loss and without a proven quarterback. As the 3-8 season wound down, Jones was as prone to a turnover as he was to a big play. Murmurs of a position change started.

"You're going to play quarterback," Jones recalled coaches telling him, "but if something happens and you're not doing as well as we thought you'd do or we think we can use you someplace else, we're going to do that."

It never came to a decision. Jones had a huge game against Iowa State in the 1995 season finale. Plus, as he pointed out, "I knew what they had. Put me at running back? Why would you want to do that? Defensive back, why would you do that?"

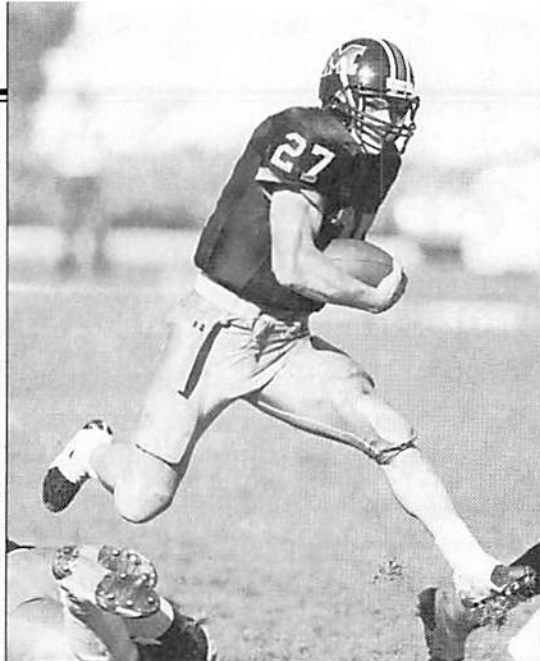
Why indeed? Jones is one of four Missouri runners to surpass 500 yards last season. Only one other Division I-A team, Texas A&M, can make that claim. Brock Olivo, who will become Missouri's all-time leading rusher this season, continues to fight off junior Devin West for the starting tailback spot.

Freshman tailback Ricardo Rhodes could be the next breakthrough runner at Missouri although he remained fourth-string after the spring. The former St. Louis prep player of the year is Troy Davis-like at 5-foot-6, 177 pounds.

Senior Ernest Blackwell has fullback size (235 pounds) and tailback speed. He busted free for an 81-yard touchdown run up the middle against Baylor. His 6.4 yards per carry average led all backs in 1996.

They run behind a beefy line that averages 290 pounds. In the rushing-rich Big 12, the Tigers were third in the conference but ninth in the country with 250.7 yards per game.

The offensive line has become one of the Big 12's best because of a small region in North Central Missouri nicknamed "The Hernia Belt." Missouri has gotten three starters from the region. Left



The Tigers' leading rusher for the last three years, Brock Olivo needs only 260 yards to become the school's all-time rushing leader.

University of Missouri

Criss was arrested for the third time in 10 months following a skirmish with a former roommate. Proctor was arrested the week of the spring game for possession of marijuana.

Linebacking will once again be the sore spot for the Tigers. The defense limped out of the spring with only four healthy bodies. Freshman sensation Barry Odom tore an ACL in the spring. His return for this season is iffy. Kaleon Green was the only junior college transfer to join the team in the spring. The smack-talking Green is from West Los Angeles Junior College.

The defensive line is in similar shape, although it started to show improvement at the end. Senior tackle Brian Cracraft is the best of an average lot. The secondary got hung out to dry because the defensive line simply could not get to the quarterback. Missouri was last in the conference, and 105th in the country, in pass efficiency defense in 1996.

True freshman kicker Jason Sproull from Bloomington, Ill., has been virtually handed the job. Missouri lost Mark Norris, the most accurate kicker in its history. Walk-on Tim Geiger made only two of five extra points in the spring game. Senior Scott Knickman will keep Sproull's spot warm until fall drills begin.

Sproull kicked an Illinois state high school record 57-yard field goal in 1996. His record lasted a few hours until it was broken later the same day.

With a wavering defense, it's on Jones' shoulders to make Missouri a bowl team. Smith wants to average 30 points per game. That hasn't been accomplished since 1969.

To do it, Missouri fully expects to take momentum from the Kansas victory.

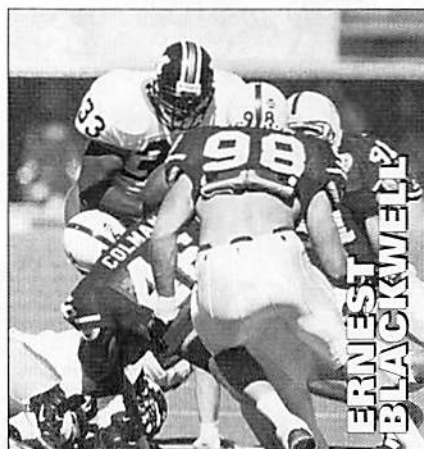
With the clock running out that day, Jones found himself in charge of a giddy huddle. To call the last play, Jones had to tell upperclassmen to shut their mouths. They did.

There was, it seemed, a new sheriff in town. Then, for once,

he followed the script. No free lance. Jones ran 6 yards on an option play to run out the clock on the season. And give new hope to a new one. ■ — Dennis Dodd

You can say it. We're already saying it. We're going to be great. I don't think there's anyone who can really stop us.
— Corby Jones
Missouri quarterback

TIGERS AT A GLANCE



MU'S KEYS TO SUCCESS

SCHEDULE NIGHTMARE

Missouri would be a bowl favorite if not for a brutal schedule. There are non-conference games at home against Ohio State and at Tulsa. Nebraska and Texas come to Columbia, but that's little relief. The conference season opens on Sept. 13 at Kansas and you can bet the Jayhawks haven't forgotten last year. Smith's decision to keep the Buckeyes on the schedule may come back to haunt him. Play an Ohio school, but make it Akron.

DANGEROUSLY THIN

There's Corby Jones and then who? After redshirt Ryan Douglass (Jones' backup), it's true freshmen and walk-ons. The Tigers can live by Jones, but can also die just as quickly if his improvising heroics leave him lying on the ground.

WEAK UP FRONT?

The secondary is quick and talented, but it can't keep playing close to the line to compensate for a weak front that produced only 16 sacks last season.

1996 RESULTS

5-6
CONFERENCE FINISH: 3-5 (4th North)

A 31	@ Texas	L, 10-40
S 14	Memphis	L, 16-19
S 21	Clemson	W, 38-24
S 28	@ Iowa State	L, 31-45
O 5	@ SMU	W, 27-26
O 12	Kansas State	L, 10-35
O 26	Oklahoma State	W, 35-28 (OT)
N 2	Colorado	L, 13-41
N 9	@ Nebraska	L, 7-51
N 16	@ Baylor	W, 49-42 (3OT)
N 23	Kansas	W, 42-25

TOP RETURNERS

RUSHING	Gms.	Att.	Yds.	YPC	YPG	TD
Olivo, B.	11	157	749	4.8	68.1	5
Jones, C.	11	130	742	5.7	67.5	9
West, D.	11	116	649	5.6	59.0	4
Blackwell, E.	11	79	506	6.4	46.0	5
Jones, R.	11	51	156	3.1	14.2	0
Ross, R.	6	1	3	3.0	0.5	0

PASSING	Gms.	Att-Cp-Int	Yds.	YPG	TD
Jones, C.	11	105-54-3	624	56.7	5
West, D.	11	1-1-0	22	2.0	0

RECEIVING	Gms.	Rec.	Yds.	YPC	YPG	TD
Olivo, B.	11	22	165	7.5	15.0	2
Brooks, E.	11	17	236	13.9	21.5	2
West, D.	11	11	83	7.5	7.5	0
Jones, R.	11	7	102	14.6	9.3	1
Murchison, J.	11	7	77	11.0	7.0	2
Ross, R.	6	7	69	9.9	11.5	1
Coleman, T.	9	5	98	19.3	10.9	1

1997 SCHEDULE

Sept. 6	Eastern Michigan
Sept. 13	@ Kansas
Sept. 20	@ Tulsa
Sept. 27	Ohio State
Oct. 4	Iowa State
Oct. 11	@ Kansas State
Oct. 18	Texas
Oct. 25	@ Oklahoma State
Nov. 1	@ Colorado
Nov. 8	Nebraska
Nov. 15	Baylor

MISSOURI TENTATIVE DEPTH CHART (FOLLOWING SPRING DRILLS)

XWR	4	Ricky Ross	6-0	181	Sr.	OLB	56	Shawn Sundall	6-2	244	Sr.
	81	Jay Murchison	6-1	195	Sr.		40	Barry Mazuch	6-5	230	Fr.
LT	61	Travis Biebel	6-4	278	Sr.	G	90	Justin Wyatt	6-4	261	Jr.
	64	Chris Meredith	6-5	285	Jr.		79	Tim Mittelstadt	6-6	271	Jr.
LG	62	Mike Morris	6-3	310	Sr.	N	97	Donnell Jones	6-4	275	Sr.
	78	Mike Silliman	6-5	310	So.		77	Pat Mingucci	6-2	266	So.
C	76	Rob Riti	6-3	271	So.	T	59	Brian Cracraft	6-3	257	Sr.
	52	Michael Valadez	6-2	292	So.		94	Steve Erickson	6-4	263	So.
RG	70	Cliff Smith	6-5	293	Jr.	E	51	Sam Josue	6-2	227	Sr.
	57	Craig Heimburger	6-3	307	Jr.		95	Daryl Whittington	6-6	218	Fr.
RT	69	Todd Neimeyer	6-5	296	Jr.	SAM	30	Kevin Ford	6-1	222	Sr.
	75	Paul Carrizal	6-4	350	Fr.		48	Al Sterling	5-11	246	Jr.
TE	88	Jake Stueve	6-3	242	Jr.	WILL	36	Pat Duffy	6-1	233	Fr.
-or-	87	Eddie Brooks	6-1	212	Jr.		38	Paul Schmanke	6-0	207	So.
QB	7	Corby Jones	6-1	227	Jr.	SS	1	Caldrinoff Easter	5-10	190	Jr.
	10	Ryan Douglass	6-2	201	Fr.		12	Terrence Binion	6-3	187	Sr.
TB	27	Brock Olivo	6-1	214	Sr.	HB	5	Shad Criss	5-10	178	Sr.
-or-	32	Devin West	6-2	215	Jr.		24	Carlos Posey	6-0	193	So.
FB	34	Ron Jones	6-3	276	Sr.	FS	2	Harold Piersey	6-2	179	Jr.
	41	Nathan Proctor	5-11	241	Fr.		14	Julian Jones	5-11	184	Fr.
ZWR	80	Torey Coleman	6-2	195	Sr.	CB	21	Randy Potter	5-10	179	Jr.
	84	Kent Layman	5-11	189	So.		13	Martez Young	6-1	183	Jr.
PK	19	Scott Knickman	5-11	228	Sr.	P	17	Vince Sebo	6-1	224	So.

Players with starting experience in bold



KANSAS

Terry Allen's trophy case was mostly barren last spring. The majority of his mementos were still stuffed in a garage somewhere in Cedar Falls, Iowa. One of the few reminders of his Northern Iowa roots in his new Kansas office was a game ball from his first head coaching victory. • Northern Iowa 10, Kansas State 8 on Sept. 16, 1989. • Kansas fans can relate. Allen enters his first season as the Jayhawks coach undefeated against K-State (3-0) as a head and assistant coach. If he can continue that dominance his transition from the I-AA Panthers to big time, Big 12 Kansas will be easier. Much easier. • If not, well, Allen already knows things can get ugly in a hurry when you start talking about wins and losses in a rivalry.

5th
NORTH
DIVISION

While he knew how to beat the laughing stock Wildcats of the '80s, powerhouse K-State of the '90s owns a four-game winning streak over Kansas for the first time since 1927.

The hate for everything purple in Lawrence goes right down to Allen's Northern Iowa roots. The Panthers' dominant color is also purple. When one of Allen's former assistants dropped into an off-season KU workout wearing purple, the incumbent Jayhawks freaked.

"Our players ran his behind out of there," Allen said. "One of the coaches' wives, when we first came down here, had purple gloves (snaps his fingers) — out of here."

The lingering purple influence will eventually be eliminated. Allen is Crimson and Blue now with a budding love for everything Jayhawk. But the handshakes and back slaps are over. Allen begins his first season trying to fill up a new trophy case with the lingering after effects of last season's 4-7 record.

The biggest project?

"Learn the team," said Allen, 39. "Everything is new. We have to go back and teach how to get into the huddle."

Teaching such fundamentals took every minute of spring

Matt Johner may have won the starting job in the spring, but he'll have to improve on his 51.9 completion percentage from 1996 to keep it.

STRENGTHS:

Terry Allen's optimism. The last three Kansas coaches were a combined 8-24-1 in their first seasons.

WEAKNESSES:

Outside of the offensive line, KU's biggest problem is Memorial Stadium. The oldest, on-campus football stadium west of the Mississippi looks it, facility upgrades are needed to entice more talent to Lawrence. Until that happens it's easy to understand that this place is so old that John Wooden worked one summer as a student helping to build it.

practice.

Allen is a throwing coach. He was a quarterback at Northern Iowa and spends most of his time during practice with the signal-callers.

While former coach Glen Mason took the money at Minnesota (\$600,000 per year) and ran, Allen will take what he can get while throwing.

"We are going to rush the football as well as we can so we can throw the play-action pass out of it," Allen said. "One of the things we did well was that we averaged 10.5 yards per attempt (at Northern Iowa). The key word is 'attempt.' We want to throw it as much as we can in situations when the defense thinks you are going to rush the football."

The man with the best brain, not necessarily the best arm, will get the job.

Allen likes audibles and guile. Senior Matt Johner came out of a three-way battle in the spring as the No. 1 but his name might be written in invisible ink. Johner started eight games last season while sharing time with the since-departed Ben Rutz. The left-handed Johner was inconsistent in 1996 completing only 51.9 percent of his passes.

It might be now or never for Zac Wegner, a redshirt sophomore. He seems to fit Allen's ball-control passing offense but has yet to throw a collegiate pass.

Akili Roberson, who transferred from Southwest Junior College in Los Angeles, threw for 3,200 yards and 23 touchdowns in two seasons.

"The cupboard is by no means bare," Allen said. "The hardest thing for us is

...if I'm a kid I'm not going to Kansas if I'm a receiver under Glen Mason. Nothing against Mace but that wasn't their feature. A little bit along the same lines at quarterback. The areas that are really critical for us, we're a little thin."

Senior Eric Vann may finally get his chance at being the top ball-carrier.

Buried behind Henley and L.T. Levine all these years, Vann (176 yards last season) may get to step up. Allen runs a lot of one-back sets so whoever is the starter will have to block, run and catch. In other words, be the center of attention instead of a decoy.

"People say 'Well, one back (means the offense) is wide open,' Allen said. "A lot of our one-back stuff is with two tight ends."

It's ironic that Vann is finally getting his chance after playing in a passing system that produced KU's last two career rushing leaders — Tony Sands and Henley.

Vann will get a battle from junior Julius Bruce.

What used to be a strength may now be a weakness.

We're talking offensive line. Mason, a former offensive lineman, always had a strong one. Allen has to rebuild starting this spring. Cleve Roberts, the 300-pound starting right guard, has transferred along with 330-pound redshirt freshman Ishmeal Knight. The top two centers, Jim Stiebel and Jared Smith, have used up their eligibility.

In the spring, Allen listed only three starters on his first-ever depth chart. "We are depleted in the offensive line," Allen said.

Pluses? The defense returns at least seven players who started the season finale against Missouri. That group includes all four starters in the secondary.

Senior cornerback Tony Blevins was a second-team All-Big 12 performer as a junior with 93 tackles and three interceptions. Strong safety Maurice Gaddie has started 22 of the last 24 games.

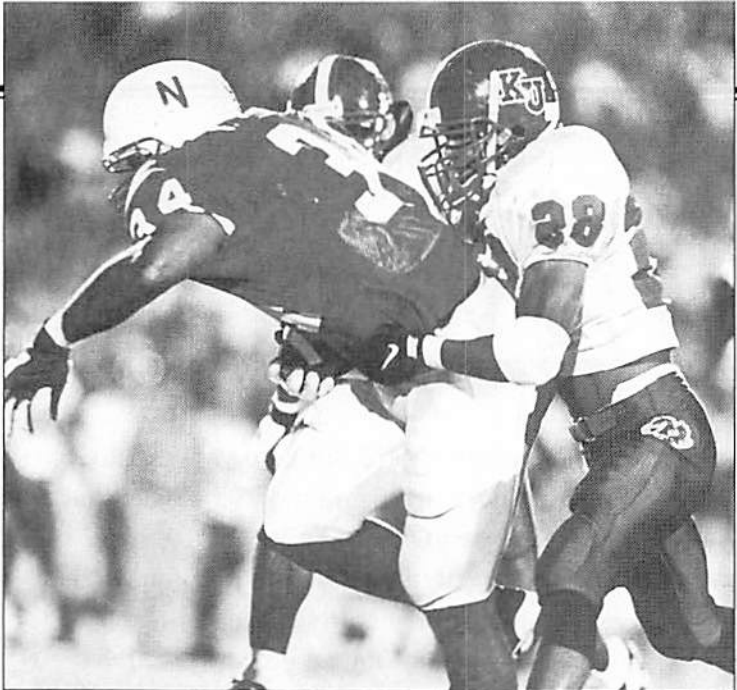
Former rodeo cowboy Brett McGraw anchors the line at nose tackle. The tackle positions were up for grabs when Allen released his first depth chart in late spring.

Senior Jason Thoren will be the sideline-to-sideline type at inside linebacker. Two years ago he led the Jayhawks in tackles. Called on to do less last season, he dropped to 67 but should be All-Big 12 material this season.

KU fans might not want to hear it but they've got another Hayden Fry disciple on their hands. The coach up the road, Kansas State's Bill Snyder, migrated south coaching under Fry. Allen was born in Iowa City where the Hawkeyes are king.

"When I was in my formative years was when Hayden came in," Allen said. "I'm going to tell you there's an awful lot of things that I believe in (from Fry). Just the approach with things and how you handle people."

Fry made himself a good chunk of cash by developing the "Power Hawk" logo. Bill Snyder, Fry's former offensive coordinator, took the idea and developed the "Power Cat" in Manhattan.



Jon Waller

Before Jayhawks everywhere gasp, don't worry. Allen doesn't intend to redesign the traditional Jayhawk logo. Expect, however, new uniforms.

"I don't think we can do that with the Jayhawk," Allen said. "That is too traditional. You don't want to step on those toes. We can do something uniform-wise. I think you'll see an underlying theme."

What exactly those changes will be, Allen isn't saying. It's more important to understand why Allen is at KU in the first place. Remember, he had turned down overtures from Minnesota before replacing Mason on Dec. 28. Several other programs had inquired about his services.

"Timing-wise I thought we could do all we could do (at Northern Iowa) besides win a national championship," Allen said. "I've always wanted to try and get into the Big 12 or the Big Ten. Visiting Lawrence parallels my background an awful lot. Iowa City and Lawrence are a lot alike."

"I think you can win here," Allen said. Winning is a relative term. Mason won but couldn't do it consistently.

"Can you beat Nebraska? Sure," Allen said. "They (KU) haven't done it since 1968 but parity and scholarship limitations are making it closer and closer every year. You get the stars to line up correctly. We're obviously here to win the Big 12 championship."

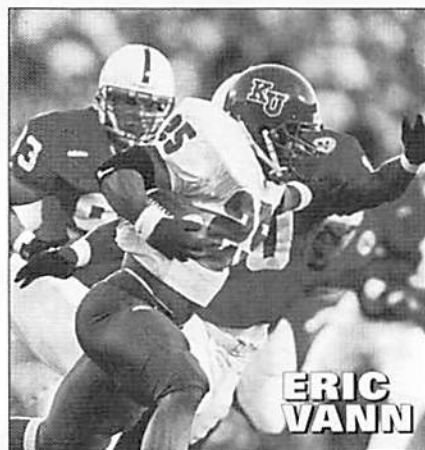
"If you were to say, 'Think of the Big 12 and Kansas,' Kansas is right in the middle. Mace did

a nice job here. He took a program from virtually 50 scholarship players to that middle we're talking about. Hell, two years ago they were in the top 10 in the country."

But even that 10-2 season in 1995 included a loss to K-State. If Allen can rid himself of the purple curse, the transition will be easier. Much easier. ■ — Dennis Dodd

Can you beat Nebraska? Sure. They (KU) haven't done it since 1968 but parity and scholarship limitations are making it closer and closer every year.

**— Terry Allen
KU head coach**



ERIC VANN

Jon Waller

JAYHAWKS AT A GLANCE

1996 RESULTS

4-7

CONFERENCE FINISH: 2-6 (5th North)

A 29	Ball State	W, 35-10
S 14	@ TCU	W, 52-17
S 28	@ Utah	L, 42-45
O 5	@ Oklahoma	W, 52-24
O 12	Texas Tech	L, 7-30
O 19	Colorado	L, 7-20
O 26	@ Nebraska	L, 7-63
N 2	@ Iowa State	W, 34-31
N 9	Kansas State	L, 12-38
N 16	Texas	L, 17-38
D 23	@ Missouri	L, 25-42

KU'S KEYS TO SUCCESS

GOOD HANDS PEOPLE

There are only three lettermen returning at receiver. The best is probably sophomore Joe Gordon who caused a stir as a freshman. Call him the "go-to" guy with the loss of Issac Byrd. Kansas is going to need some other hands in the fall or Gordon will find himself double-teamed. Is Eric Vann ready to carry the ball 30 times a game?

'VAN'TASTIC?

Is Vann good enough to carry the offense as June Henley and Tony Sands did at times? He's got a workman-like physique and fair speed, but is still unproven. Primarily a receiver last year, the Jayhawks need him to rack up the yards with the ball in his hands.

2,043

That's the number of yards gained by Iowa City blue-chip tailback Jess Holland last year. Terry Allen inked him on the final day of the football signing period. Expect Holland to suit up in the fall and push for the back-up job.

TOP RETURNERS

RUSHING	Gms.	Att.	Yds.	YPC	YPG	TD
Vann, E.	11	51	176	3.5	16.0	1
Hill, H.	2	2	33	16.5	16.5	0
Bruce, J.	4	5	10	2.0	2.5	0
Davis, P.	3	2	9	4.5	3.0	0
Macklin, J.	3	5	8	1.6	2.7	0
Johner, M.	10	59	-14	-0.2	-1.4	0

PASSING	Gms.	Att	Cp-Int	Yds.	YPG	TD
Johner, M.	10	185	96-4	1232	123.2	10

RECEIVING	Gms.	Rec.	Yds.	YPC	YPG	TD
Vann, E.	11	20	284	14.2	25.8	1
Gordon, J.	11	16	240	15.0	21.8	2
Chandler, M.	9	4	30	7.5	3.3	0
Gray, B.	7	1	8	8.0	1.1	1
Bruce, J.	4	1	7	7.0	1.8	0

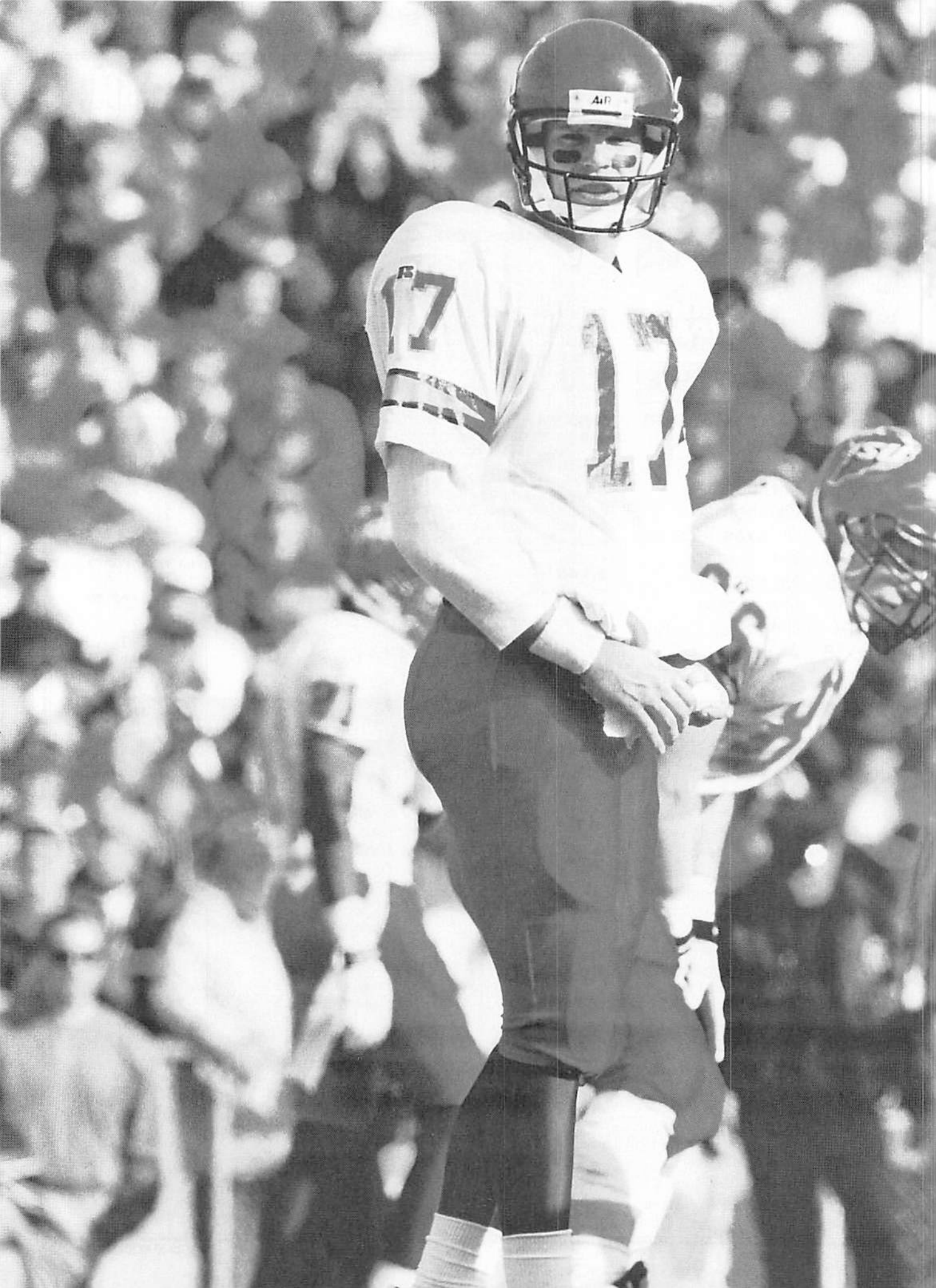
1997 SCHEDULE

Aug. 28	Ala.-Birmingham
Sept. 6	TCU
Sept. 13	Missouri
Sept. 20	@ Cincinnati
Oct. 4	Oklahoma
Oct. 11	@ Texas Tech
Oct. 18	@ Colorado
Oct. 25	Nebraska
Nov. 1	Iowa State
Nov. 8	@ Kansas State
Nov. 15	@ Texas

KANSAS TENTATIVE DEPTH CHART (FOLLOWING SPRING DRILLS)

SE	12	Eric Patterson	6-1	200	Fr.	LE	63	Dion Johnson	6-4	285	So.
	9	Preston McGaughy	6-1	210	Jr.		69	Jeff Redhage	6-6	260	So.
LT	50	Michael Lies	6-2	285	Jr.	NG	70	Brett McGraw	6-1	285	Sr.
-or-	71	Derrick Chandler	6-7	320	Sr.		59	John Williams	6-4	275	So.
LG	73	Dameon Hunt	6-2	285	So.	RE	83	Dewey Houston	6-4	280	Sr.
	53	Pat Bishop	6-2	280	Sr.		90	Dan Dercher	6-6	265	Jr.
C	68	Chris Enneking	6-3	260	So.	OLB	47	Pat Brown	5-11	210	Jr.
	56	Bob Schmidt	6-1	265	Fr.		45	J.J. Johnson	6-2	230	Sr.
RG	66	Marc Owen	6-2	295	Fr.	ILB	38	Jason Thoren	6-2	230	Sr.
	58	Terrence Floyd	6-2	295	Fr.	-or-	98	Lamar Sharpe	6-4	255	Jr.
RT	76	Justin Glasgow	6-6	320	Jr.	ILB	52	Tyrus Fontenot	5-8	220	So.
	62	Jerome Parks	6-2	250	Jr.	-or-	54	Steve Bratten	6-1	235	Jr.
TE	84	Brian Gray	6-3	225	Jr.	OLB	99	Ron Warner	6-3	230	Sr.
	91	Jason Gulley	6-3	255	Fr.		51	Dariss Lomax	6-2	220	Fr.
FL	4	John Gordon	5-11	180	So.	LCB	23	Jason Harris	5-10	170	Sr.
	7	Quincy Roe	5-9	165	Fr.		29	Manolito Jones	5-9	170	Sr.
QB	13	Matt Johner	6-1	195	Sr.	FS	28	Tony Blevins	6-0	180	Sr.
-or-	14	Zac Wegner	6-2	220	So.		18	Chad Coellner	5-11	190	So.
RB	25	Eric Vann	5-9	205	Sr.	SS	24	Maurice Gaddie	5-9	190	Sr.
	35	Julius Bruce	5-9	195	Jr.		27	Michael Allen	5-10	190	Jr.
FB	32	Greg Davis	5-10	225	Fr.	RC	37	Jamie Harris	5-10	175	Jr.
	31	Dustin Curry	6-0	210	Jr.	-or-	26	Avery Randle	6-0	175	Jr.
PK	2	Jastin Antispel	6-0	165	Fr.	P	41	Dean Royal	6-2	180	Sr.

Players with starting experience in bold



IOWA ST.

How does a program measure progress? If you're third-year coach Dan McCarney at Iowa State, you look at spring scrimmages. • Spring game, 1995. New coach McCarney watches his Cardinal starters trail the Gold reserves much of the game before a Todd Doxzon-to-Calvin Branch touchdown pass saves the day in the waning minutes of Iowa State's spring game. His Cardinal defense almost lost the 7-3 game anyhow, as the Gold ran out of time on the starters' 4-yard-line. • Spring game, 1997. McCarney watches his Cardinal starters obliterate the Gold, 38-0. His starting running back scores four touchdowns, his quarterback completes 89 percent of his passes and his defense pitches a shutout.

6th
NORTH
DIVISION

That's progress.

"That's the kind of score you would hope it would be," McCarney said while watching 5-foot-8, 189-pound sophomore Darren Davis (younger brother of the departed Troy Davis), rumble for 136 yards and four touchdowns for the Cardinal. "It doesn't seem like that long ago that we had to put on a two-minute drill with our No. 1 offense to come from behind to win. And it wasn't playing against a great defense."

No, things have indeed changed over the past two years. Iowa State is several times more competent on offense than it was in April of 1995, even with the loss of Troy Davis. Now it is Darren who will shoulder the load on the ground for the Cyclones.

"Darren Davis is special, and I think you saw that," McCarney said. "He's got great feet and great acceleration. As good an athlete as he was when he got here, he really improved this spring."

"I had a day to show my stuff, and I did it," said Darren, who scored on runs of 5, 7, 1 and 9 yards. He gained 204 yards on 30 carries as a freshman. "That came from all of the hard work in practice and in the weight room."

STRENGTHS:

Troy Davis and his over 4,000 yards in two seasons may be gone, but the Cyclones are confident his brother, Darren, can pick up much of the slack. He's not ready for Heisman hype yet, but he should still run for over 1,000 yards this year.

WEAKNESSES:

It would be too easy to point at the defense, but that's not a new problem at ISU. The offensive line, which lost four starters, must find personnel and a way to give the offense time to execute. If not, last year's two wins may look like a milestone.

He was asked for the first of what will be countless times, "Can you be as good as your brother?"

"I have a long way to go, so I can't say that yet," he said. "But as I grow older, we'll find out."

McCarney must replace six starters on offense from a team that went 2-9.

Gone is Davis, the only back in college football history to run for 2,000 yards in two successive seasons. Also missing is left tackle Tim Kohn, an institution at the spot during his career. He, too, is now in the NFL. Beefy center Pat Augafa has also graduated, ditto for quarterback Todd Doxzon.

But before you start feeling too sorry for the Cyclones, a team that averaged nearly 30 points per game last season, take a look at the returning weapons.

There's junior quarterback Todd Bandhauer who threw three touchdowns as a freshman in beating Oklahoma State. He completed 17-of-19 passes for 203 yards in the spring game.

"I really liked the things I saw with our No. 1 offense. Todd Bandhauer was real sharp," McCarney said. "He's completed over 70 percent of his passes all spring, and I know that's not a Nebraska defense every day in practice, but he's been consistent in every situation."

Bandhauer said he expects that the Cyclones will be airing it out more this fall.

"I think 17-of-19 is a pretty good indication that we'll be passing the ball more next year," he said. "I know the plays were designed to get me into a rhythm,

Doug DeVoe

To better utilize pocket passer Todd Bandhauer's abilities, the Cyclones are going to open up the offense in 1997.



Doug DeVoe

but that's OK. If I can throw the ball five yards and Ed Williams runs with it for 40 more, I'll take that any day."

Speaking of Williams, the silky-smooth, honorable-mention all-conference receiver who caught 34 passes for 491 yards and three touchdowns in '96, there's also Tyrone Watley, an Eric Metcalf type with incredible leaping ability, and Daman Green, a possession type with reliable hands. Toss in budding star Damian Gibson at tight end and fullback Joe Parmentier, a Moose Johnston-type near the end zone, and you've got a buffet table of possibilities for Bandhauer to choose from.

But it's the offensive line that concerns McCarney the most. He'll anchor his hopes on two-year starter Matt Rahfaldt at left guard. Rahfaldt will be joined by center Marc Cortez, right guard Ben Beaudet, and tackles Oliver Ross and Kurt Levetzow.

"Our line has made a lot of progress. We're still not as good as we were at the end of last season, but we're gaining on it," McCarney said. "They're getting better each week."

ISU's two-win campaign of last season is somewhat deceiving, however. Five of the nine losses were by a combined total of 17 points. Past Iowa State teams would have been in full retreat in October and November. Last year's hung tough, despite having one of the nation's worst defenses.

Long maligned at Iowa State, the defense showed some encouraging signs in its first dress rehearsal under new defensive coordinator John Skladany, hired from Colorado State in the off-season. Of the Gold's paltry 78 total yards of offense, only 14 came on the ground. A switch to a combination of alternating 5-2 and 4-3 schemes has shown positive initial results.

"We're flying around pretty good," McCarney said of the defense. "We're a little more athletic, and we have a little more depth. We've still got to make a lot of physical

The Cyclones are in good hands with Ed Williams, one of the conference's best athletes, returning at split end.

but is a definite threat to regain his form and be a major contributor.

The secondary returns three starters as well. Dawan Anderson is back after taking two interceptions back for touchdowns as a sophomore, and senior Kevin Hudson will be looking to bounce back after a sub-par 1996 season. Strong safety Tracy Williams is a steady tackler and decent pass defender. Headhunter Preston Rhamy is trying to fend off a challenge from freshman Dustin Avey for the free safety job.

The new face to emerge from the defense has been Avey, the hometown product who intercepted both the Cardinal's Bandhauer and the Gold's Mitch Ryerson while splitting time with each team. The speedy Avey, who was all-state in both football and track at Ames High School, is running neck-and-neck with Rhamy for a starting spot in the secondary this fall.

"I've been waiting a year-and-a-half to get back out there and make a play," said Avey. "I like roaming around, trying to pick the ball. I want to make big plays and help this defense."

He said it didn't matter whether he or Rhamy was No. 1 on the depth chart come fall.

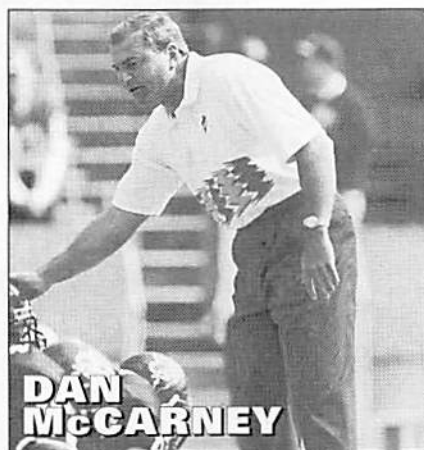
"I think we'll be pretty even,"

Avey said. "We'll both see a lot of playing time this fall. They need a guy who can run support and play pass defense, too."

In the kicking department, junior Jamie Kohl is back after an up and down sophomore season. McCarney signed Miami punter Carl Gomez to take over Marc Harris' punting chores, as well as to press Kohl for the kicking honors. ■ — Todd Stevens

We're flying around pretty good. We're a little more athletic, and we have a little more depth.

**— Dan McCarney
ISU head coach**



Jon Waller

CYCLONES AT A GLANCE



ISU'S KEYS TO SUCCESS

NEAR MISSES

The Cyclones won back-to-back games for the first time in seven years last season. Too bad they were the only wins. Against one of the nation's toughest schedules, ISU lost five games by a combined 17 points. This team must find a way to win those games if confidence is ever going to grow in Ames.

CHEATING NO MORE

With Troy Davis gone, defenses won't have to put eight in the box to stop the Cyclones. That means ISU will have even more pressure on them if they try to spread the ball around. Not exactly what a team searching for an identity needs out of the gate.

FROM THE BOTTOM UP

Can the defense, which looked encouraging in the spring, improve on last year's dismal showing that had them ranked among the nation's worst in every category? At least they can't be any worse. An alternating 5-2 and 4-3 scheme is now in place.

1996 RESULTS

2-9

CONFERENCE FINISH: 1-7 (6th North)

S 7	Wyoming	L, 38-41
S 14	@ Iowa	L, 13-38
S 21	Northern Iowa	W, 42-23
S 28	Missouri	W, 45-31
O 12	Texas A&M	L, 21-24
O 19	@ Oklahoma State	L, 27-28
O 26	@ Baylor	L, 21-49
N 2	Kansas	L, 31-34
N 9	@ Colorado	L, 42-49
N 16	Nebraska	L, 14-49
N 23	@ Kansas State	L, 20-35

1997 SCHEDULE

Aug. 30	Oklahoma State
Sept. 6	@ Wyoming
Sept. 13	@ Minnesota
Sept. 20	Iowa
Oct. 4	@ Missouri
Oct. 11	@ Texas A&M
Oct. 25	Baylor
Nov. 1	@ Kansas
Nov. 8	Colorado
Nov. 15	@ Nebraska
Nov. 22	Kansas State

TOP RETURNERS

RUSHING	Gms.	Att.	Yds.	YPC	YPG	TD
Davis, D.	11	30	204	6.8	18.5	0
Parmentier, J.	11	3	9	3.0	0.8	0
Green, D.	11	1	9	9.0	0.8	0
Bandhauer, T.	2	1	-7	-7.0	-3.5	0

PASSING	Gms.	Att	Cp-Int	Yds.	YPG	TD
Bandhauer, T.	2	7-3-1		13	6.5	1
Williams, E.	10	1-0-1		0	0.0	0

RECEIVING	Gms.	Rec.	Yds.	YPC	YPG	TD
Williams, E.	10	34	491	14.4	49.1	3
Watley, T.	11	27	419	15.5	38.1	4
Green, D.	11	22	222	10.1	20.2	0
Davis, D.	11	8	117	14.6	10.6	1
Parmentier, J.	11	7	74	10.6	6.7	3
Grant, J.	8	1	9	9.0	1.1	0
Gibson, D.	10	1	7	7.0	0.7	1
Radke, T.	7	1	4	4.0	0.6	0

IOWA STATE TENTATIVE DEPTH CHART (FOLLOWING SPRING DRILLS)

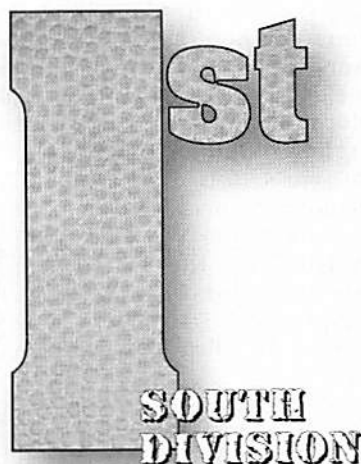
SE	81	Ed Williams	6-3	197	Sr.	LE	36	James Elmore	6-2	229	So.
-or-	8	Daman Green	6-0	185	Sr.		49	Brandon Rutledge	5-11	214	So.
LT	51	Oliver Ross	6-4	292	Sr.	LT	86	Mike Hansen	6-2	266	So.
	76	Jim Tuso	6-3	280	Jr.		52	James Reed	6-1	250	Fr.
LG	75	Matt Rahfaldt	6-3	288	Sr.	NG	90	Greg Schoon	6-3	285	Sr.
	92	Terry Thomas	6-2	259	So.		55	Antonio Mays	6-2	278	So.
C	73	Marc Cortez	6-2	283	So.	RT	97	Rudy Ruffolo	6-3	257	Sr.
	63	Ben Bruns	6-4	291	Fr.		69	Nigel Tharpe	6-5	258	Fr.
RG	70	Ben Beaudet	6-4	296	Fr.	RE	26	Chin Achebe	6-1	242	So.
	72	Bill Marsau	6-5	283	So.		50	Kip King	6-0	231	Jr.
RT	71	Kurt Levetzow	6-5	266	Jr.	ILB	48	Dave Brcka	6-2	235	So.
	78	Eugene Bernal	6-5	302	Sr.		54	Andre Lee	6-0	234	Jr.
FL	21	Tyrone Watley	5-9	187	Sr.	ILB	38	Michael Cooper	6-1	215	Sr.
	83	Gerrick Bivins	5-11	177	Sr.		11	Derrik Clark	6-4	245	Sr.
QB	17	Todd Bandhauer	6-3	226	Jr.	LC	13	Kevin Hudson	6-0	178	Sr.
-or-	12	Mitch Ryerson	6-3	217	Fr.		24	Doug Densmore	5-10	194	Fr.
TB	2	Darren Davis	5-8	189	So.	RC	14	Dawan Anderson	5-8	168	Jr.
	4	James O'Neal	6-1	213	Fr.		19	Kemp Knighten	6-0	196	Jr.
FB	42	Joe Parmentier	5-11	254	Jr.	SS	31	Tracy Williams	6-0	220	Sr.
	33	Jerome Heavens	5-10	214	Fr.		27	Nate Chown	6-0	205	Fr.
TE	89	Damian Gibson	6-4	264	Jr.	FS	32	Preston Rhamy	5-8	181	Sr.
	93	Matt Rysavy	6-1	250	Sr.	-or-	7	Dustin Avey	6-3	199	Fr.
PK	45	Jamie Kohl	6-0	202	Jr.	P		Carl Gomez	6-2	195	Fr.

Players with starting experience in bold



TEXAS

For the last three seasons, the Texas football team has claimed the title of conference champions. • In 1994, the Longhorns shared the Southwest Conference crown with Texas Tech, Rice, TCU and Baylor. In '95, Texas won the final SWC title outright by beating arch-rival Texas A&M in College Station. Then, last season, the Longhorns upset third-ranked Nebraska to claim the inaugural Big 12 championship. • The last two conference championships gave the Longhorns an opportunity to play in a bowl alliance game on a national stage against an elite opponent. Each time, UT fell on its face and again missed opportunities to push the program from conference champions to national contenders.



The 1997 season should provide Texas with another shot at redemption, with 14 starters returning from last year's team to help the Longhorns in their quest to repeat as conference champs for the fourth year in a row, and perhaps win an alliance bowl game.

Should UT accomplish that feat, it would mark the second-longest streak for consecutive conference championships in the school's 104-year history of college football. The longest streak came between 1968 and 1973 when the Longhorns won six consecutive SWC championships under then-head coach Darrell Royal.

"We are excited about what we accomplished and hope to build on that success," said head coach John Mackovic, who's entering his sixth year at UT. "We have a good nucleus of returnees, but have several areas we need to improve on and some voids to be filled."

Six of the returnees are on the offensive side of the ball. That nucleus of experience again will be the driving force for the Longhorns. The success of the unit will rely in large part on the highly-experienced backfield of senior quarterback James Brown, junior tailback Ricky Williams and senior fullback Gerrod

Fifth-year senior James Brown may have to do more of his trademark improvising in 1997 due to questions at receiver.

Coleman. Brown season in which they both earned All-Big 12 honors. Brown comes into the '97 season as the Big 12's top passer, and Williams returns as one of the conference's top rushers.

Both players have been consistent play-makers throughout their careers at Texas.

Brown is on pace to become the top passer in UT history in yardage, attempts, and completions. He already owns the school record for career touchdown passes with 48.

Williams, as a sophomore in a league full of talented running backs, was one of three named to the All-Big 12 first team at his position. In '97, he will try to upgrade that honor by becoming a candidate for the Heisman Trophy.

The powerful Coleman is the least experienced and acclaimed member of the starting backfield. Although he is a senior, Coleman has not started a game in his career and has carried the ball only 17 times. Coaches were impressed, however with his blocking ability in spring practices.

Paving the way for the potent Texas backfield will be one of the top returning offensive lines in the conference. Led by senior center Ryan Fiebig, the Longhorn offensive line returns four starters from last year's unit that pushed the Texas running attack to a final ranking of 24th in the nation. In the last four games of the 1996 season, the Longhorns rushed for 244.8 yards per game, in large part because of the cohesion of the young line.

STRENGTHS:

The front line, anchored by tackles Chris Akins and Casey Hampton, is enormous and will prove tough against the run. The linebackers are versatile and solid, if not flashy.

WEAKNESSES:

Mike Adams is trying to make the Pittsburgh Steelers. Sure-handed tight end Pat Fitzgerald is trying to crack the Buffalo Bills lineup. That leaves speedster Wane McGarity as the Horns' top receiving threat and he underwent arthroscopic knee surgery in May. Starting tight end Derek Lewis is solid, albeit unspectacular.

The line also surrendered only two sacks during that span, including a sack shutdown against the Cornhuskers' defense, which had a string of 39 straight games with at least one sack coming into the Big 12 championship game.

The unit lost All-American Dan Neil, who was drafted by the Denver Broncos, but sophomore Roger Roesler will step in and should prove an adequate replacement.

Although the Texas coaches have indicated that a large amount of the offensive load will fall on Williams' shoulders (he should carry the ball 20-25 times per game), few offenses can exist on running alone. Brown has proven to be a sharp passer with a strong arm, but in previous years, he always had a star receiver to whom he could throw.

Receiver Mike Adams and tight end Pat Fitzgerald, Brown's top two "go-to" receivers from last season, have gone on to the NFL after being drafted by the Pittsburgh Steelers and Buffalo Bills, respectively. The void will have to be filled by committee in 1997.

Wane McGarity returns as the top play-maker in the wide receiving corps. His speed and hands should provide Brown with a deep threat to keep opposing defenses from loading up at the line to stuff the run.

The rest of the receivers are more-or-less untested. Juniors Bryan White and Mike Scarborough, sophomore Dustin Armstrong and freshmen Brandon Healy and Jamel Thompson will have to step up as reliable receivers if the Longhorn passing game is to be as effective as it needs to be.

Look for the Texas offense to rely heavily on Williams, particularly early on. He has the strength and ability to carry the offense against teams like Rutgers, UCLA and Rice. But Brown and his receivers will have to find a rhythm in order for the Longhorns to take the next step toward national prominence.

Defense again will be the weakness of the team in the '97 season. The good news for Texas fans is that it will be much-improved over last season's unit which finished 65th nationally in total defense.

Bobby Jack Wright steps in as the new defensive coordinator, bringing the promise of a more aggressive defense with him. Wright, who coached alongside former coordinator Leon Fuller in the 1980s and early 1990s, will re-implement the attacking 4-3 defense for which Fuller became loved by the Longhorn faithful. In Wright's system, the defense revolves around the middle linebacker, a position which this season will be held by an able body. Sophomore

Aaron Humphrey returns after an outstanding freshman season, in which he was named Big 12 Defensive Newcomer of the year by both the *Austin American-Statesman* and the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*. He played outside linebacker in the 3-4 defensive scheme last season, but was moved to the middle in the spring.

The most encouraging thing about UT's move to the 4-3 defense is the presence of pressure on the quarterback and a swarming run defense. In 1996, the Longhorns recorded a meager 18 sacks and ranked 86th nationally against the run. In 1997, Texas can't rely on a stellar secondary to make up for a poor pass rush. All four members of last year's starting secondary have gone on to the NFL, leaving the Longhorns to rely on a young and inexperienced group to handle pass coverage.

Therefore, Texas must be able to force opposing quarterbacks into quick throws and hurried decisions to take the pressure off of the young group. Having four down linemen definitely should help in run support.

Senior Chris Akins will anchor the group. His size (6-foot-1, 295 pounds) and strength (556 bench press, 760 squat) again will prove a crucial asset in the middle of the line. Akins returns as the most experienced player of the group, with 32 starts under his belt, and is among the top

returnees at the nosetackle position in the country.

Aside of Akins, the starting group largely will be determined in the fall — "largely" being the key word. Casey Hampton, at 315 pounds, will challenge for starting time at the tackle spot opposite Akins. Incoming mountain — er, freshman — Leonard Davis, at 6-6 and 350 pounds, certainly will get a look at the tackle position as well. Cedric Woodard showed a lot of improvement at tackle in the spring and could have secured a starting position with his performance.

The key to defensive success for the Longhorns will be

execution of Wright's philosophy. Texas must be aggressive defensively, if only to compensate for a lack of star players. The Longhorns will field a solid group, but they must be able to pressure the quarterback and force turnovers to take the step up to exceptional. Scheduling will help give the young secondary a chance to mold. Only three teams on the '97 schedule — UCLA, Colorado and Kansas — will bring a pass-oriented style to the field.

All the tools are in place for a possible fourth consecutive conference championship — the challenge for this year's team will be to reach the next level. ■ — Jason Becker

After an honor-filled freshman season at outside linebacker, Aaron Humphrey has moved to middle linebacker in the Horns' new 4-3 system.



Corby D. Roberts

“We have a good nucleus of returnees, but have several areas we need to improve on and some voids to be filled.”

**— John Mackovic
UT head coach**

LONGHORNS AT A GLANCE



Corby D. Roberts

UT'S KEYS TO SUCCESS

KEEP RICKY HEALTHY

Williams likely will be the offense, at least for the first several weeks. If he gets injured, Texas is in trouble. The Horns have several running backs who have shown potential in practice, but that doesn't necessarily translate to success in games. Williams is the meal ticket this year.

PASSING GAME

Texas must find a couple of legitimate receiving threats to keep opposing defenses from bringing eight or nine players up to the line to gang up on Williams. Who would have thought losing Mike Adams would have been this devastating?

SECONDARY PROBLEM

New defensive coordinator Bobby Jack Wright must devise a scheme that will keep his young secondary from getting bombed at will by opponents. A major part will be the ability of the front line to pressure opposing passers into making bad decisions.

1996 RESULTS

8-5

CONFERENCE FINISH: 7-2 (1st South)

A 31	Missouri	W, 40-10
S 7	New Mexico State	W, 41-7
S 21	Notre Dame	L, 24-27
S 28	@ Virginia	L, 13-37
O 5	Oklahoma State	W, 71-14
O 12	Oklahoma%	L, 27-30 (OT)
O 26	@ Colorado	L, 24-28
N 2	Baylor	W, 28-23
N 9	@ Texas Tech	W, 38-32
N 16	@ Kansas	W, 38-17
N 29	Texas A&M	W, 51-15
D 7	Nebraska*	W, 37-27
J 1	vs. Penn State\$	L, 15-38

* Big 12 Championship Game • St. Louis, Mo.

\$ Tostitos Fiesta Bowl • Tempe, Ariz.

% Cotton Bowl • Dallas, Texas

TOP RETURNERS

RUSHING	Gms.	Att.	Yds.	YPC	YPG	TD
Williams, R.	12	205	1272	6.2	106.0	12
Butcher, C.	6	30	141	4.7	23.5	1
Brown, J.	12	48	119	2.5	9.9	2
Coleman, G.	6	7	16	2.3	2.6	1
McGarity, W.	12	1	14	14.0	1.2	0

PASSING	Gms.	Att	Cp-Int	Yds.	YPG	TD
Brown, J.	12	299	170-12	2468	205.6	17
Watson, R.	6	63	38-1	509	84.8	2
Cherry, M.	4	8	4-0	29	7.3	0

RECEIVING	Gms.	Rec.	Yds.	YPC	YPG	TD
Williams, R.	12	25	291	11.6	24.3	2
McGarity, W.	12	18	318	17.7	26.5	4
Lewis, D.	9	8	114	14.3	12.6	0

97 SCHEDULE

Sept. 6	Rutgers
Sept. 13	UCLA
Sept. 27	@ Rice
Oct. 4	@ Oklahoma State
Oct. 11	Oklahoma*
Oct. 18	@ Missouri
Oct. 25	Colorado
Nov. 1	@ Baylor
Nov. 8	Texas Tech
Nov. 15	Kansas
Nov. 28	@ Texas A&M

* Cotton Bowl • Dallas, Texas

TEXAS TENTATIVE DEPTH CHART (FOLLOWING SPRING DRILLS)

SE	6	Mike Scarborough	6-0	190	Jr.
-or-	80	Dustin Armstrong	6-1	192	So.
LT	75	Octavious Bishop	6-5	320	Jr.
	70	Mike Garcia	6-6	276	Fr.
LG	72	Roger Roesler	6-5	305	So.
	65	Travis Wood	6-2	280	Jr.
C	58	Ryan Fiebigler	6-3	282	Sr.
	54	Russell Gaskamp	6-4	290	Jr.
RG	79	Ben Adams	6-5	305	Jr.
	74	Joe Hubbard	6-4	295	Fr.
RT	67	Jay Humphrey	6-7	295	Jr.
	76	Brent Kelly	6-6	290	Sr.
TE	82	Derek Lewis	6-2	230	So.
-or-	89	Steve Bradley	6-3	252	Sr.
QB	5	James Brown	6-0	195	Sr.
	10	Richard Walton	6-5	210	Jr.
RB	11	Ricky Williams	6-0	220	Jr.
	32	Jeffrey Clayton	5-10	200	Sr.
RB	29	Gerrod Coleman	6-0	232	Sr.
-or-	32	Jeffrey Clayton	5-10	200	Sr.
FL	8	Wane McGarity	5-8	190	Jr.
	1	Bryan White	5-10	180	Jr.
PK	4	Phil Dawson	5-11	193	Sr.

DE	95	Gray Mosier	6-5	2
	52	Cedric Woodard	6-2	
DT	64	Casey Hampton	6-1	
	99	Derrick Curry	6-4	
DT	96	Chris Akins	6-1	
	97	Tim Warfield	6-3	
DE	91	Will Goodloe	6	
	92	Damon Luckett	/	
SLB	45	Dwight Kirkpatrick		
	51	Brandon Nava		
MLB	49	Aaron Humphrey		
	46	Dusty Renfro		
WLB	59	Kyle Richardson		
	55	Anthony Hicks		
RC	31	Tony Holmes		
-or-	9	Quinton Wallace		
FS	24	Donald McCow		
	27	James Clark		
SS	38	Aaron Babino		
	13	Bryan Willing		
LC	28	Anton Hecto		
-or-	9	Quinton W		
P	15	Mark Sr		

Players with starting experience in bold



TEXAS TECH

Like much of America, Texas Tech head coach Spike Dykes had a feeling back in March that Tennessee quarterback Peyton Manning would forgo his senior season and enter the NFL Draft. And since Dykes' Red Raiders open the 1997 season at Tennessee's Neyland Stadium, Dykes was following the "Manning Watch" with more than just a passing interest. • When it was time to announce his decision, however, Manning stepped to the microphone and shocked many football fans across the country with the following two words: "I'm staying." • Dykes doesn't know Manning personally, but he has a pretty good idea about what persuaded Manning to pass up heavy doses of green in the NFL for one more year in Tennessee's orange.

2nd
SOUTH
DIVISION

"The whole world, including myself, knew Peyton Manning was turning pro," said the witty West Texan, who has compiled a 63-52-1 record in 10 years at Tech. "It was a done deal. But then, right before he went public with his decision, we started spring practice and Peyton somehow got his hands on a tape of our first practice. He took one look at that tape, and said to himself, 'A chance to play against these guys is worth coming back for.' I just know that's what happened."

Probably not, but it makes for a great story, anyway. And despite Dykes' "low-key, poor me" public persona, the Raiders are probably not in as dire straits as Dykes would like opponents to believe.

There are certainly some large holes to fill from last year's team, which finished 7-4 in the regular season before being blanked, 27-0, by Iowa in the Alamo Bowl. Most notably among the departed from a year ago are Doak Walker Award-winning running back Byron Hanspard and third-team All-America offensive lineman Ben Kaufman.

But the Texas Tech cupboard isn't completely bare, and metaphorically, Dykes is rather famous for producing eight-course meals — or eight-win seasons — out of a couple cans of

tuna and macaroni and cheese.

So, while the Raiders may lack some high-profile flash, 13 returning starters (four offensive, seven defensive and two specialists) give Tech enough substance to make a serious push for another bowl berth.

"We have our work cut out for us, but this is not necessarily new territory for us, either," Dykes said. "The year before, we lost a couple All-Americans (linebacker Zach Thomas and safety Marcus Coleman) and managed to survive and be very competitive. So, we definitely plan on showing up every week to see what happens."

"But the big question is how to replace Byron. If you can find a recipe to fill that hole, I'll buy a ton of those cookbooks. In fact, I'll probably start my own cooking show."

Last year, Hanspard certainly feasted on opponents, rushing for 2,084 yards, the fifth-best single-season rushing total in NCAA history. He surpassed the 200-yard mark in five games in 1996, and narrowly missed it two other times against Texas A&M (198) and Kansas (194). Hanspard's 2,276 total offensive yards accounted for almost half of Tech's total yards in 1996.

Unlike Manning, however, Hanspard elected to forgo his senior season. He was selected by the Atlanta Falcons in the second round of the NFL Draft on April 19.

That leaves a huge hole at running back for Tech, made worse by the fact that Hanspard's backup of a year ago, Adrian Ervin, also is gone after rushing for 280

STRENGTHS:

In Zebbie Lethridge, Texas Tech has one of the most experienced, proven quarterbacks in the Big 12. Lethridge has his shaky moments, but he also has proven he can find ways to win.

WEAKNESSES:

With two of the last four Doak Walker Award winners (Byron Hanspard and Bam Morris), Tech fans began referring to their school as "Tailback U" last year. This season, however, the Raiders may be known as "Tailback O." There doesn't appear to be anyone in position to replace Hanspard.

Senior Zebbie Lethridge is the only quarterback in school history to lead Tech to three consecutive bowl games.

yards in his senior season last year.

The good news for Tech is that Ricky Williams is among the potential replacements for Hanspard. The bad news, however, is that it's not the same Ricky Williams who stars at Texas. Tech's Williams is one of six freshmen running backs who could see considerable playing time this year.

The leading candidate to replace Hanspard at tailback was sophomore Clint Robertson, who rushed for a total of 9 yards on seven carries last year. But he suffered a knee injury that will have him rehabbing until possibly November.

At fullback, sophomore Sammy Morris, who missed the final four games of last season due to academics, returns. The Raiders' fourth-leading rusher and receiver, his experience will be key.

The inexperience at tailback will put an increased burden on senior quarterback Zebbie Lethridge to carry the Red Raiders' offense. Fortunately for the Red Raiders, Lethridge is one of the more dependable college quarterbacks in the country.

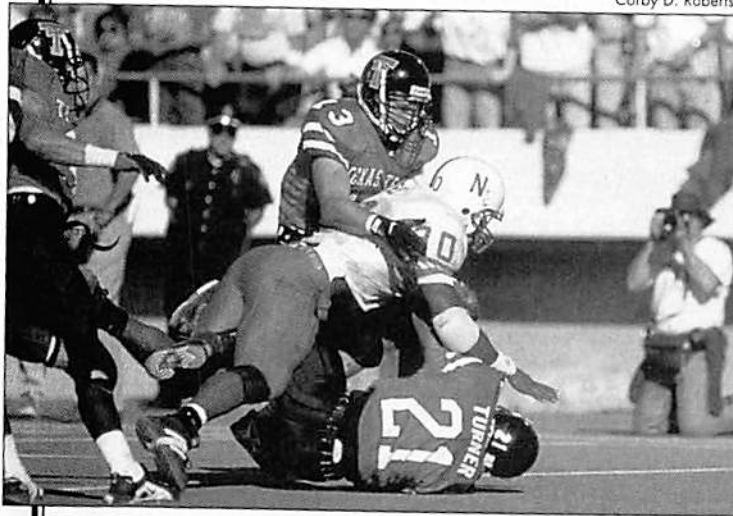
Lethridge, who has made 33 consecutive starts, is the first quarterback in school history to lead Tech to three consecutive bowl games, and he is approaching almost every school record for passing and total offense.

"It's a good thing we do have Zebbie back, because we're definitely going to need a big season from him," Dykes said. "Because of him, I think the quarterback position is the strength of our team. He's already had a great career here, and I think the best is yet to come. Zebbie is the most fierce competitor I have ever coached."

Lethridge should benefit from the return of last year's top two receivers, junior Donnie Hart (22 catches for 494 yards) and senior Malcolm McKenzie (21 for 227). But despite Hanspard's departure, the soft-spoken Lethridge isn't putting any more pressure on

Senior Dane Johnson (13) and junior Corey Turner (21) help form what could be the Big 12's best secondary.

Corby D. Roberts



himself or the passing game this year.

"My job will be pretty much the same as it has been," said Lethridge, who has passed for 5,167 yards in his career at Tech. "I'm not going to try to play beyond my abilities or anything like that, and we're not going to change our entire offensive philosophy."

There is considerable concern about whether the Texas

Tech offensive line can get the job done in 1997. In addition to losing Kaufman, the Raiders also will need to find replacements for three other offensive line mainstays of the past. And at tight end, the two top players from a year ago, Brad Spinks and P.J. Jasin, are also gone.

"I feel like we have some talented guys who can step in and play well," Dykes said. "But our No. 1 concern offensively is confidence. The guys that left had so much confidence because they had been around

here so long. That's tough to replace."

Defensively, there are not as many holes to fill, although the loss of All-Big 12 linebacker Robert Johnson and All-Big 12 defensive end Tony Daniels will hurt. But with seven returning starters, the Red Raiders seem to have a solid foundation.

Tech appears to be particularly strong up front, where junior defensive end Montae Reagor and senior tackles Corey Chandler and Cody McGuire return after performing well last year.

"The interior line of our defense should be one of the strengths of our team," Dykes said. "Corey Chandler and Cody McGuire give you two guys who have started for a long time, two guys who are really good players. And at defensive end, I think Montae Reagor has a chance to be a great football player."

Another defender with a chance for greatness is senior cornerback Tony Darden. Dykes calls Darden, who had three interceptions last year, one of the best corners he has coached at Tech. Darden usually was assigned to the opponent's top receiver last year, and he performed extremely well under pressure.

Against Texas A&M, for example, he held the Big 12's leading receiver at the time, Albert Connell, without a catch in the Red Raiders' 13-10 win in College Station.

Darden joins seniors Dane Johnson and Duane Price and junior Corey Turner to form a secondary that has the potential to be one of the better units in the Big 12.

That unit will be tested early when the Raiders face pass-happy Tennessee in the opener on August 30. But perhaps the most difficult part of the schedule comes when Texas Tech opens its Big 12 season at Baylor on Oct. 4.

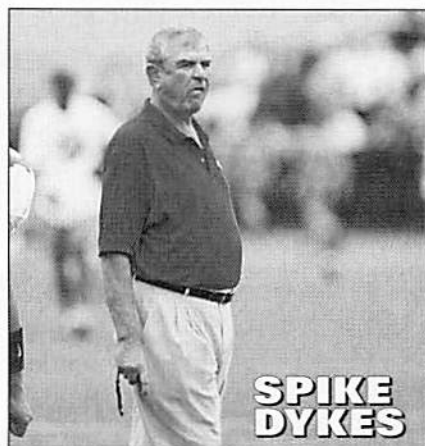
"We'll definitely be tested by our schedule," Lethridge said. "To open up against Tennessee at Neyland Stadium will give us an indication right away of what kind of team we have. Ever since I've been here, we've played tough teams early, and that has helped us."

Of course, this is the first year Lethridge won't have Hanspard, and while Tech wasn't a one-man team last year, the stats say Hanspard was pretty close to being at least half the offense. ■ — Rusty Burson

But the big question is how to replace Byron (Hanspard). If you can find a recipe to fill that hole, I'll buy a ton of those cookbooks.

**— Spike Dykes
Texas Tech head coach**

RED RAIDERS AT A GLANCE



Corby D. Roberts



TECH'S KEYS TO SUCCESS

FRESH BLOOD

True freshmen running back Jason Coffey, defensive back Antwan Alexander and defensive tackle Stoney Garland could all make an impact this year. The Red Raiders also are counting on strong play from JUCO All-American offensive lineman Dan Martin.

RUNNING INTO TROUBLE

Texas Tech's running game could be in big trouble this year. Not only did the Red Raiders lose Byron Hanspard, but they also must rebuild almost all of their entire offensive front. It will be essential for the young Tech line to grow up quickly.

2,276 YARDS

That number — nearly half of Texas Tech's total offensive production last year — is what Hanspard produced in total offense. Spike Dykes will have to be a magician to duplicate that number in the Tech backfield in 1997. Losing Clint Robertson will make the job even harder.

1996 RESULTS

7-5

CONFERENCE FINISH: 5-3 (2nd South)

A 31	@ Kansas State	L, 14-21
S 7	Oklahoma State*	W, 31-3
S 21	@ Georgia	L, 12-16
S 28	Utah State	W, 58-20
O 5	Baylor	W, 45-21
O 12	@ Kansas	W, 30-17
O 19	Nebraska	L, 10-24
O 26	@ Texas A&M	W, 13-10
N 9	Texas	L, 32-38
N 16	Southwestern La.	W, 56-21
N 23	@ Oklahoma	W, 22-12
N 29	vs. Iowa\$	L, 0-27

* Texas Stadium • Irving, Texas

\$ Alamodome • San Antonio, Texas

1997 SCHEDULE

Aug. 30	@ Tennessee
Sept. 13	SW Louisiana
Sept. 20	North Texas
Oct. 4	@ Baylor
Oct. 11	Kansas
Oct. 18	@ Nebraska
Oct. 25	Texas A&M
Nov. 1	Kansas State
Nov. 8	@ Texas
Nov. 15	@ Oklahoma State
Nov. 22	Oklahoma

TOP RETURNERS

RUSHING	Gms.	Att.	Yds.	YPC	YPG	TD
Lethridge, Z.	11	130	342	2.6	31.1	7
Morris, S.	8	29	226	7.8	38.3	4
Peters, R.	9	1	27	27.0	3.0	0
Mitchell, S.	11	2	16	8.0	1.5	0

PASSING	Gms.	Att.	Cp-Int	Yds.	YPG	TD
Lethridge, Z.	11	267	117-6	1686	153.3	11

RECEIVING	Gms.	Rec.	Yds.	YPC	YPG	TD
Hart, D.	10	22	494	22.5	49.4	4
McKenzie, M.	10	21	227	10.8	22.7	0
Morris, S.	8	13	221	17.0	27.6	2
Bass, S.	9	8	76	9.5	8.4	0
Mitchell, S.	11	6	116	19.1	10.5	1

TEXAS TECH TENTATIVE DEPTH CHART (FOLLOWING SPRING DRILLS)

TE	91	Tim Winn	6-4	223	So.	LE	34	Montae Reagor	6-2	249	Jr.
	53	Zac Potter	6-3	248	Jr.		70	Kenneth Kacal	6-1	220	Jr.
LT		Jonathan Gray	6-5	380	Fr.	DT	93	Corey Chandler	6-5	258	Sr.
		Rick Fielder	6-4	290	Jr.		90	Jason Jones	6-1	314	So.
LG	66	Chris Whitney	6-3	278	Sr.	NT	74	Cody McGuire	6-5	276	Sr.
		Shane Roberts	6-5	283	Jr.		99	Cody Patton	6-6	279	Jr.
C	63	Jay Pugh	6-3	287	Sr.	RE	89	Taurus Rucker	6-0	244	So.
	50	Robert Haddon	6-3	275	Jr.		46	Keith Cumby	5-10	209	Jr.
RG	60	Jayson Hansen	6-4	297	Sr.	SLB	29	Ty Ardoin	6-0	185	Jr.
	77	Erik Carruth	6-4	284	Jr.		23	Reagan Bownds	5-10	170	Jr.
RT	62	Justin Collingsworth	6-5	288	Jr.	MLB	48	Eric Butler	6-1	251	Sr.
	64	Steve McFadden	6-5	272	Fr.		83	Kyle Shipley	6-3	232	So.
FL	17	Malcolm McKenzie	6-2	211	Sr.	WLB	5	Kevin McCullar	6-3	205	So.
	19	Mark Washington	5-11	181	Fr.		26	Tim Duffie	5-11	218	So.
SE	82	Donnie Hart	6-1	187	Jr.	R	1	Duane Price	5-11	165	Sr.
	81	Tim Baker	6-5	184	Fr.		36	Robby Cartwright	6-1	193	Jr.
QB	8	Zebbie Lethridge	6-0	192	Sr.	RC	21	Corey Turner	5-9	171	Jr.
	9	Rob Peters	6-3	219	So.		3	Darwin Brown	5-11	163	So.
IB		Anthony Malbrough	5-11	195	Fr.	LC	11	Tony Darden	6-0	196	Sr.
	32	James Easterling	5-9	182	Fr.		10	Brian Giddens	5-10	171	Fr.
FB	42	Sammy Morris	6-0	212	So.	FS	13	Dane Johnson	5-11	195	Sr.
	40	Harland Hill	5-10	202	Fr.		12	Rickey Hunter	5-10	167	Fr.
PK	97	Jaret Greaser	6-0	180	Jr.	P	14	Jeremy Hernandez	5-11	190	Jr.

Players with starting experience in bold



TEXAS A&M

When the Aggies lined up to play BYU in the season-opening Pigskin Classic, little did they know things would end 14 weeks later in the same way they were about to start — a thrashing on the road against a superior opponent. BYU's 41-37 victory last August sent A&M spiraling — something highly-touted Brannndon Stewart's passes didn't do — to a series of lows. A&M suffered its first 0-2 start since 1988, its biggest margin of loss to Texas since 1982 and its worst season since 1983. It was no wonder, then, that the day after the nightmare ended, head coach R.C. Slocum hit the recruiting trail instead of taking his customary hunting trip. • The Aggies start 1997 with four new assistant coaches, including new offensive and defensive coordinators.

3rd
SOUTH
DIVISION

The recipe for success this year includes skillful implementation of what the Aggies already have, and luck in gaining what they don't. With a roster full of juniors and sophomores, A&M has experience at every position except the defensive line, where all three starters need to be replaced, and at wide receiver, where last year's leader is gone, and one of the key backups, Donte Hawkins, has been suspended indefinitely for violating team rules. A&M's secondary is still young and fighting injuries, but unlike last year, it doesn't have to start the season on the road against the most pass-happy team in college football.

While Slocum described his team as "far from the finished product," coming out of spring drills, he also declared the drills the most enthusiastic and productive of his nine seasons in College Station. "We didn't have a bad practice," Slocum said.

This edition of Aggie football again will be led by Stewart, the Tennessee transfer who was supposed to light Kyle Field on fire, but instead watched his team's season, as well as his own, go down in flames.

"The media and the fans are asking Brannndon to go out and never make a mistake, and win every game," new A&M quarter-

backs coach Ray Dorr said. "I'm not asking him that. As a coach, you want him to go out and play to his capabilities. But my standards are probably not as high as his standards."

Nevertheless, Slocum said that for the Aggies to rebound from last year's disappointment, the play at the quarterback position has to improve. Whether that play comes from Stewart or backup Randy McCown doesn't concern Slocum, as long as whoever it is doesn't get the Aggies beaten. For now, it's Stewart's job to lose, and although Slocum showed much patience with Stewart's development last year, he likely will make a change more quickly this season, if the quarterback exhibits the same bad decision-making early.

The same can't be said of A&M's running game, where four of the seven backs rushed for more than 500 yards last year. All of them are back, including juniors Sirr Parker, Eric Bernard and D'Andre 'Tiki' Hardeman. Hardeman anchors the fullback position, with Parker, Bernard and sophomore Dante Hall giving the Aggies one of the most talented rotations of tailbacks in the country. However, as talented as the Big 12's version of the Four Horsemen is, the key is Parker. The Los Angeles native suffered though a bout of frustration late last season, and even considered transferring to USC, but has since boosted both his commitment to A&M and to gaining weight, to nearly 200 pounds.

"Sirr's a heavier back than when he came here two years ago," running backs coach Ken Rucker said. "He's more physi-

STRENGTHS:

With the three-headed monster of Sirr Parker, Eric Bernard and freshman sensation Dante Hall at tailback, the Aggies are loaded. D'Andre "Tiki" Hardeman is primed to break through as one of the Big 12's best fullbacks. But are there enough footballs to go around and keep everyone happy?

WEAKNESSES:

Just one? Take your pick between an inexperienced defensive line, an ineffective secondary or an unproven passing game. Throw in a couple of question marks at linebacker and it's a tough choice.

Bob Beauvais

Playing in his third offensive system in four years can't help the confidence of the much-maligned Brannndon Stewart.

cal than he's ever been because he knew what it took in the weight room to become a Division I back."

On the outside, A&M's receiving corps was set for a vast improvement until May 2, when Slocum suspended Hawkins. Now things are once again up in the air as the Aggies will start the season without two players who combined for more than half of their 157 receptions last year.

With question marks at receiver, A&M's tight ends will have to step up their level of play. The position is one of the Aggies' strengths, however, as they are loaded with quality tight ends, so carrying more of the passing game's burden shouldn't be too much to ask.

Derrick Spiller and Daniel Campbell will compete into the fall for the starting job, with the winner figuring to be one of Stewart's primary targets as the receivers develop.

The good news for Stewart is that A&M's offensive line is solid, and averages about 6-foot-5, 295 pounds. New offensive coordinator/offensive line coach Steve Marshall said he likes the fact that he inherited a unit with some experience, but said that alone doesn't guarantee results. "We have some ability on the offensive line. (Junior) Cameron Spikes and (sophomore) Semisi Heimuli on the right side are guys who are still young, and offensive line is a repetition position," Marshall said. "So there is still some growing that has to go on there."

While there still is room to grow, this year's line doesn't have to do much to make the running backs look good, but does need to do a better job of protecting Stewart, who was sacked 27 times in '96, in order for the Aggies' offense to click.

On the other side of the ball, the defensive front will undergo a major overhaul in 1997. Slocum, defensive line coach Bill Johnson and defensive coordinator Mike Hankwitz all agree that true freshmen will play more than token time in the fall. But that's not to say the spring starters are going to give up their positions. "I think our guys at our position know that at the moment we're a little short-handed in a lot of areas," Johnson said. "But we've got some help coming."

"We will bring in freshmen who will compete for the defensive line spots," Slocum said. "Some of them will see action right away."

Translation? Sam Houston State, Southwestern Louisiana and North Texas are good opposition for the line to start the season, but after that it could be a long year.

As tradition dictates, linebackers will be the heart and soul of the A&M defense in 1997. Dat Nguyen had a superb season in 1996, punctuated by 17 tackles against Texas. Slocum rarely tags his players as All-America prospects, but with Nguyen he makes an exception with an exceptional player. The question for Slocum is

whether the other linebackers will improve to A&M's standards.

There's no doubt that the leader of the group, as well as the entire defense, is Nguyen. "I think we made progress everyday in the spring," said the junior who has led the Aggies in tackles the last two years. "We may be the most experienced group on defense, because of Phillip (Meyers), Warrick (Holdman), Trent (Driver) and myself. We all came in together in '94, and we know what it takes and what we need to do to be back where we used to be — the Wrecking Crew."

For the Aggies to have a chance at making a Big 12 title run this season, Nguyen has to be right. With inexperience up front and a secondary still toasty from being burned over and over again last season, A&M's linebackers will have to carry the defense.

Behind Nguyen sits one of Slocum's biggest concerns — the secondary. Although it brings far less uncertainty

The media and fans are asking Brannndon to go out and never make a mistake and win every game. I'm not asking him (to do) that.

**— Ray Dorr
A&M quarterback coach**



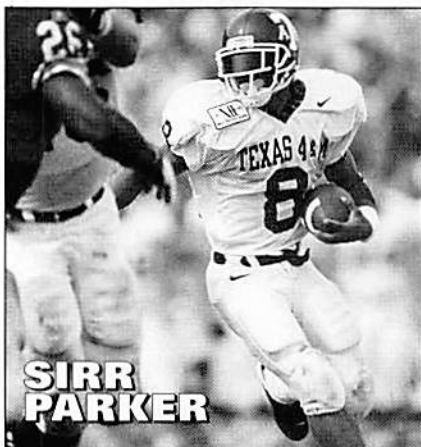
Although Slocum doesn't like to tag his players as All-America prospects, he's made an exception for linebacker Dat Nguyen.

than last year, A&M's defensive backfield is still young and somewhat injury-prone.

"The key is that they had the experience of playing last year, and there's no substitute for experience, particularly in the defensive secondary," said new defensive coordinator Mike Hankwitz. "I was pleased with the progress we made in the spring because we're starting to establish some depth."

"If we continue to improve in two-a-days like we did in the spring, we'll be in good shape there," Hankwitz said.

Slocum, though, does not discount the possibility of new freshmen competing for playing time. A&M signed five defensive backs, including former Aggie All-American Aaron Glenn's younger brother, Jason, who was considered one of the best defensive backfield prospects in the country. If Glenn is the real deal, he should win a starting job. ■ — Tom Turbiville



SIRR PARKER

Doug DeVoe

AGGIES AT A GLANCE

A&M'S KEYS TO SUCCESS

CONTROLLING THE BALL

With their cast of running backs and a solid offensive line, the Aggies have the potential to gain chunks of yardage and chew up the game clock. With their overhauled defense and suspect passing game in the hands of Brannndon Stewart, they'd better. A one-dimensional team will never be a conference, let alone national, contender. Just ask Iowa State and '96 Heisman Trophy runner-up Troy Davis.

STEWART, TAKE TWO

The Tennessee transfer was supposed to be the second-coming in College Station, but didn't get his act together all season. The Aggies don't need him to be All-Worldly, but he can't get them beaten.

WHERE'S THE CREW?

Dat Nguyen is an All-America candidate at linebacker, but his supporting cast in the Wrecking Crew has to return to form if the Aggies are going to make any noise in the Big 12.

1996 RESULTS

6-6

CONFERENCE FINISH: 4-4 (3rd South)

A 24	@ BYU	L, 37-41
S 14	@ SW Louisiana	L, 22-29
S 21	North Texas	W, 55-0
S 28	Colorado	L, 10-24
O 5	Louisiana Tech	W, 63-13
O 12	@ Iowa State	W, 24-20
O 19	Kansas State	L, 20-23
O 26	Texas Tech	L, 10-13
N 2	@ Oklahoma State	W, 38-19
N 9	@ Baylor	W, 24-7
N 16	Oklahoma	W, 33-16
N 29	@ Texas	L, 15-51

TOP RETURNERS

RUSHING	Gms.	Att.	Yds.	YPC	YPG	TD
Parker, S.	12	149	704	4.7	58.7	2
Hardeman, D.	12	109	669	6.1	55.8	17
Hall, D.	12	92	642	7.0	53.5	3
Bernard, E.	12	116	598	5.2	49.8	5
Broyles, M.	10	11	35	3.2	3.5	0
PASSING	Gms.	Att	Cp-Int	Yds.	YPG	TD
Stewart, B.	12	299	146-7	1904	158.7	9
McCown, R.	7	27	11-1	186	26.6	0
RECEIVING	Gms.	Rec.	Yds.	YPC	YPG	TD
Hawkins, D.*	12	32	409	12.8	34.1	0
Spiller, D.	11	14	194	13.9	17.6	0
Hardeman, D.	12	9	78	8.7	6.5	1
Campbell, D.	12	8	103	12.9	8.6	0
Bernard, E.	12	8	55	6.9	4.6	0
Oliver, A.	8	7	120	17.1	15.0	1

* suspended

1997 SCHEDULE

Sept. 6	Sam Houston St.
Sept. 20	SW Louisiana
Sept. 27	North Texas*
Oct. 4	@ Colorado
Oct. 11	Iowa State
Oct. 18	@ Kansas State
Oct. 25	@ Texas Tech
Nov. 1	Oklahoma State
Nov. 8	Baylor
Nov. 15	@ Oklahoma
Nov. 28	Texas

* Texas Stadium • Irving, Texas

TEXAS A&M TENTATIVE DEPTH CHART (FOLLOWING SPRING DRILLS)

SE	1	Aaron Oliver	6-2	193	Jr.	LE	94	Zerick Rollins	6-3	255	Sr.
	80	Chris Cole	6-1	178	So.		57	Kevin Vestal	6-3	256	So.
RT	73	Cameron Spikes	6-5	304	Jr.	NT	90	Stephen Young	6-1	275	Fr.
	78	Andy Vincent	6-4	287	So.		97	Marcus Heard	6-3	293	Sr.
RG	62	Semisi Heimuli	6-3	295	So.	RE	45	Brad Crowley	6-5	265	Sr.
	71	Chris Valletta	6-4	293	Fr.		92	Mike Kazmierski	6-5	262	So.
C	69	Koby Hackrad	6-5	275	Jr.	OLB	51	Phillip Meyers	6-1	221	Sr.
-or-	53	Rex Tucker	6-6	270	Jr.		58	Chris Thierry	6-2	228	So.
LG	72	Steve McKinney	6-5	289	Sr.	ILB	28	Trent Driver	6-3	240	Sr.
	56	Toby McCarthy	6-5	270	Fr.		44	Sean Coryatt	6-1	212	So.
LT	76	Chris Ruhman	6-6	295	Sr.	ILB	9	Dat Nguyen	6-1	219	Jr.
	74	Brandon Houston	6-6	277	Jr.		60	Rory Couch	5-11	220	Fr.
TE	87	Derrick Spiller	6-3	237	Jr.	OLB	43	Warrick Holdman	6-1	229	Jr.
-or-	89	Daniel Campbell	6-6	253	Jr.		46	Cornelius Anthony	6-1	216	Fr.
FL	88	Leroy Hodge	6-3	208	So.	CB	39	Jason Webster	5-10	178	So.
	81	Matt Bumgardner	6-2	196	So.		4	Delvin Wright	5-11	170	Fr.
QB	7	Brannndon Stewart	6-3	215	Jr.	CB	21	Shun Horn	5-11	188	Jr.
	15	Randy McCown	6-3	206	So.		27	Jeff Wilson	5-10	175	Fr.
BB	20	D'Andre Hardeman	5-11	230	Jr.	FS	30	Brandon Jennings	6-2	195	So.
	33	Marc Broyles	5-11	246	Jr.		5	Toya Jones	6-3	190	Jr.
AB	22	Eric Bernard	5-10	190	Jr.	SS	48	Rich Coady	6-1	200	Jr.
-or-	8	Sirr Parker	6-0	195	Jr.		18	Sedrick Curry	6-3	192	So.
PK	3	Kyle Bryant	5-7	167	Sr.	P	6	Shane Lechler	6-3	219	So.

Players with starting experience in bold



OKLAHOMA

Perhaps not since national sensation Marcus Dupree has a sophomore-to-be had so much influence on the University of Oklahoma's offense going into the fall. • A true testament of how the OU staff feels about tailback DeMond Parker is revealed by looking at his statistical line from the spring scrimmages. No yards on no carries. • Parker's stats were the same as head coach John Blake's one-year-old son Jourdan Fitzgerald. The reason being Blake is trying to be as protective of Parker as he is his own son. • Rather than risk injury, Parker sat out the scrimmages. • The Oklahoma staff is already well aware of the talents of the 5-foot-10, 182-pound running back from Tulsa, Okla.

4th
SOUTH
DIVISION

Parker will be the leading returning rusher (based on yards per game) in the Big 12 Conference. He finished fifth in the league last year, averaging 107.64 yards per game. Those who finished ahead of him — Troy Davis, Byron Hanspard, David Thompson and June Henley — are gone. Overall, Parker was 22nd nationally.

The Booker T. Washington High School product rushed for 1,184 yards on 180 carries in 1996. His 6.6 yards per carry was the conference's best. Texas' Ricky Williams returns having rushed for more yards (1,272) than Parker last year, but Williams did it in 12 games including the Big 12 Championship. His yards per game (106.0) were fewer than Parker's.

The second-team All-Big 12 back became the first OU freshman since Spencer Tillman in 1983 to rush for over 1,000 yards. Parker was also selected as the Big 12 Offensive Newcomer of the Year. The only freshman nationally to run for more yards than Parker was Wisconsin's Ron Dayne and he had 105 more carries.

Parker had six 100-yard-plus games, including four consecutive. Only nine other players in OU history have had three or more consecutive games of 100 yards or more.

DeMond Parker racked up four consecutive 100-yard plus games as a backup — a feat only nine others have accomplished in school history.

STRENGTHS:

Settling on a quarterback had to be priority No. 1 in the spring. Justin Fuente has "edged" Eric Moore for the start going into fall drills. The Sooners never seemed to have an identity offensively last fall. Fuente, while not as mobile as Moore, is OU's best chance to spreading the ball around. Adding more dropback sets could turn Fuente into a star.

WEAKNESSES:

Based on the Sooners' quick trigger in replacing signal-callers, you get the feeling there may be more switches in the fall. At least it's progress.

His season-high 244 yards and three touchdowns came in the second game of the year against San Diego State. He broke free on runs of 86, 48 and 53.

To make it even more enticing, keep in mind that he did it as a backup to senior James Allen and ran behind a suspect offensive line.

Now Allen is gone and the offensive line is at least a notch better. Even better news is that Parker is better as well.

He's added close to 10 pounds to his frame while maintaining his 4.3 speed in the 40-yard dash. His upper body is thicker, although the coaching staff thinks he could add a little more weight to make him stronger and more durable.

"DeMond hasn't scrimmaged but he looks really awesome," Blake said. "He's really better. He's more focused in knowing his role now as being the starting tailback. He knows everyone is really going to key on him. He's doing extra to make himself even better."

An example of that is he did not bust a play during the spring drills. His blocking has also improved from a year ago, a phase of the game that wasn't his strong suit.

Quarterback Justin Fuente marvels at what Parker did in his limited action during the spring.

"He's one of the quickest people I've ever seen in my life," said Fuente. "He's so explosive and quick and sees the whole field and makes cuts that you really didn't think were possible at the time. He can be exceptional. It's a matter of him wanting to do it and he's shown every-

body that he wants to be good and I think he will be.

"When he puts on some more weight, it's just going to be scary."

Those who will play behind Parker also rave about him.

"He's so quick," said junior tailback Carson Fields. "That's a great skill to have. He can be as good as he wants to be."

Fields and sophomore Bennie Butler battled through the spring for the back-up role to Parker. Both had their moments, but Butler, recovering from a nagging hamstring injury, pulled ahead going into the fall by rushing for 125 yards on 10 carries in the spring finale.

The offense had an impressive spring with the competition at running back fierce. Even fullback figures to be interesting with Jermaine Fazande having a good spring and moving ahead of former starter Michael Rose.

The offensive line has undergone change and should be improved. Redshirt freshman Scott Kempenich was so impressive at left tackle that the coaches decided to move last year's starter, Jay Smith, to guard. The right side of the line figures to be the same as last season with Greg Moyer at guard and Sammy Williams at tackle. Senior Bruce McClure solidifies the line at center.

The play of junior Jason Freeman has OU considering more two tight end formations with Stephen Alexander expected to fully recover from his season-ending shoulder surgery. Like Parker, Alexander, a former all-conference performer, was held out of spring scrimmages. Freeman took advantage and caught six passes for 100 yards with two touchdowns in the spring finale.

The best news to come out of the spring is that OU appears to have a clear-cut No. 1 quarterback going into the fall for the first time since Cale Gundy's senior season.

Fuente clearly established himself ahead of Eric Moore. In the spring, the sophomore was more poised and disciplined and didn't try to force the big play as he was apt to do last year.

"Justin is really improving," Blake said. "Part of that is experience. He was a redshirt freshman last year, and I can see experience is really helping this young man develop into a pretty good quarterback."

At the end of the season, Fuente said he would use the spring to determine whether he might transfer. He wanted to make sure that he fit OU's system, which was questioned after he lost the starting job to Moore in the final two games. Thoughts

The tentative starter this fall, Justin Fuente started 1996 on fire (including a win over Texas), but faded late.

I've seen what our defense can do when they really turn it on. We've got some holes to fill and hopefully the freshmen will help us.

**— John Blake
OU head coach**

of going elsewhere are now gone.

"It was one of those deals that once spring started I didn't think about it," Fuente said. "It wasn't a matter of winning the job or anything. It was just a matter of coming out and doing some things that I enjoy doing and we are doing those things now. Not huge changes."

Among the changes is that OU is doing more dropback plays.

"We've done a lot more straight dropback things that are really nice," said Fuente, who played in a straight dropback system at Union High School in Tulsa. "We did it last year. We just didn't do it very much."

The one question that remains to be answered is, "Who will be the 'go-to' receiver?" With Michael McDaniel gone, OU needs to find a reliable wideout. The candidates include Chris Blocker, Mo Little and Jarraill Jackson. Help could come in the form of junior college receiver Leroy Fields. He earned JUCO All-America honors last year, catching 41 passes for 910 yards at Navarro Community College.

Defensively, the Sooners saw some bright lights, but concerns as well.

Travian Smith's return to strongside linebacker from defensive end has been successful. He switched from linebacker to end last year to boost OU's pass rush.

Sedric Jones, a 6-4, 243 sophomore, has stepped up at middle linebacker and might have the big-play potential to help offset the loss of Tyrell Peters. The other outside linebacker job is Dale Allen's if he can stay healthy.

Brandon Daniels' move to safety was deemed a success. The sophomore's conversion from receiver should provide depth and a nickel back. Gana Joseph and Terry White figure to be the starters at safety. Sophomore Mike

Woods continues to improve at corner, but the other side is wide open with Pee Wee Woods, Corey Ivy and Cedric Stephens competing for a job there.

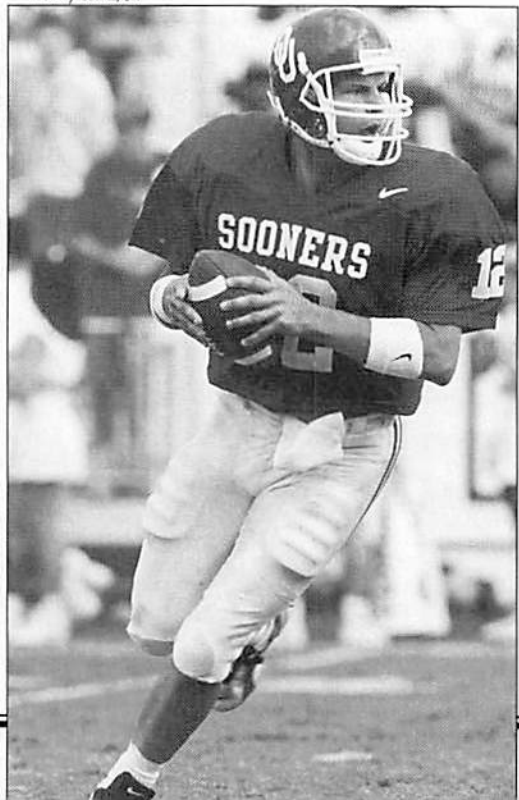
The interior of the defensive line is solid with junior Kelly Gregg and senior Martin Chase. The question is at defensive end. Cornelius Burton will start at right end, but the left side is questionable. Senior Shaq Brown is listed as the starter, although the hope is that freshmen Corey Callens or Rocky Bright can step in and help.

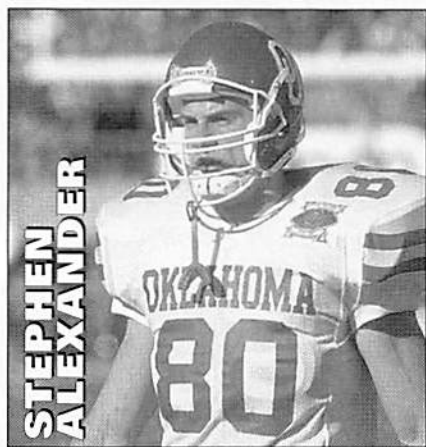
"I've seen what our defense can do when they really turn it on," Blake said.

"So, I'm not really concerned about it. We've got some holes to fill and hopefully the freshmen will help us."

Now if only the defense can find a freshman (or two) to contribute as much as Parker did last year to the offense. ■ — Dan O'Kane

Harry Lentz, Jr.





STEPHEN ALEXANDER

Harry Lenz, Jr.

1997 SCHEDULE

Aug. 23	vs. Northwestern*
Sept. 6	Syracuse
Sept. 20	@ California
Sept. 27	Louisville
Oct. 4	@ Kansas
Oct. 11	Texas*
Oct. 18	Baylor
Oct. 25	Kansas State
Nov. 1	@ Nebraska
Nov. 8	Oklahoma State
Nov. 15	Texas A&M
Nov. 22	@ Texas Tech

* Cotton Bowl • Dallas, Texas # Soldier Field • Chicago, Ill.

SOONERS AT A GLANCE



OU'S KEYS TO SUCCESS

INCOMING HELP

With order restored in the offensive line, the only true question is at receiver. The Sooners didn't find a "go-to" guy in the spring. There are capable players who won't get you beat on the roster, but no "difference maker." OU is hoping that two or three of the incoming receivers can step right in. JUCO transfer Leroy Fields (6-5, 200, 4.5) is the best bet, but don't count out freshmen Ahmed Kabba, J.T. Thatcher and Chris Lewis.

RUSH REPLACEMENTS

The Sooners are solid at tackle, but the lack of pressure coming from the outside will leave them vulnerable. The rush end spots are wide open as the Sooners open fall camp.

WRAPPING THEM UP

There were numerous tackles missed during the spring from those looking to fill voids at linebacker and on the end. Lousy tackling cost the Sooners numerous scores in 1996. This must be corrected.

1996 RESULTS

3-8

CONFERENCE FINISH: 3-5 (4th South)

S 7	TCU	L, 7-20
S 21	@ San Diego State	L, 31-51
S 28	Tulsa	L, 24-31
O 5	Kansas	L, 24-52
O 12	Texas*	W, 30-27 (OT)
O 19	@ Baylor	W, 28-24
O 26	@ Kansas State	L, 35-42
N 2	Nebraska	L, 21-73
N 9	@ Oklahoma State	W, 27-17
N 16	@ Texas A&M	L, 16-33
N 23	Texas Tech	L, 12-22

* Cotton Bowl • Dallas, Texas

TOP RETURNERS

RUSHING	Gms.	Att.	Yds.	YPC	YPG	TD
Parker, D.	11	180	1184	6.6	107.6	10
Moore, E.	7	46	181	3.9	25.9	1
Fazande, J.	7	12	43	3.6	6.1	0
Rose, M.	5	4	28	7.0	5.6	1
Jackson, J.	11	2	1	0.5	0.1	0

PASSING	Gms.	Att-Cp-Int	Yds.	YPG	TD
Fuente, J.	10	196-91-10	1271	127.1	8
Moore, E.	7	112-45-5	741	105.9	7

RECEIVING	Gms.	Rec.	Yds.	YPC	YPG	TD
Alexander, S.	7	22	438	19.9	62.6	2
Parker, D.	11	17	188	11.1	17.1	0
Freeman, J.	11	13	137	10.5	12.5	1
Williams, G.	11	11	90	8.2	8.2	1
Blocker, C.	11	9	175	19.4	15.9	1
Little, M.	11	7	105	15.0	9.5	1
Jackson, J.	11	4	77	19.3	7.0	1

OKLAHOMA TENTATIVE DEPTH CHART (FOLLOWING SPRING DRILLS)

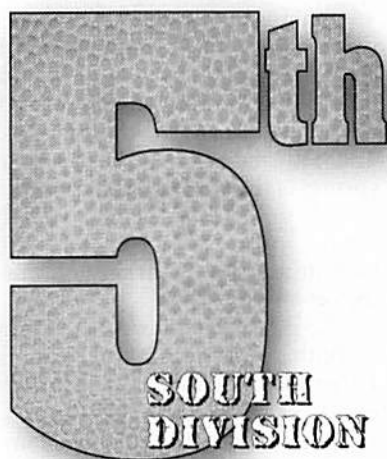
SE	24	Chris Blocker	6-1	207	Jr.	LE	96	Shaq Brown	6-5	283	Sr.
	18	Mo Little	6-3	219	Sr.		91	Mike Phipps	6-2	261	Sr.
LT	72	Scott Kempenich	6-6	320	Fr.	LT	97	Kelly Gregg	6-0	275	Jr.
	79	Tim Conley	6-6	318	Jr.		98	Steve Williams	6-4	279	So.
LG	71	Jay Smith	6-3	281	Jr.	RT	93	Martin Chase	6-2	293	Sr.
	64	Jon Mulac	6-4	276	Sr.		94	Ryan Fisher	6-3	277	Fr.
C	73	Bruce McClure	6-5	282	Sr.	RE	87	Cornelius Burton	6-5	272	So.
	77	Tim Macias	6-2	264	Jr.		78	Ryan Allen	6-2	255	So.
RG	54	Greg Moyer	6-2	253	Jr.	OLB	36	Travian Smith	6-6	227	Sr.
	62	Ricky Clark	6-2	300	So.		42	Anthony Davis	5-11	210	So.
RT	75	Sammy Williams	6-5	312	Sr.	MLB	49	Terrance Malone	6-2	228	Jr.
	70	Barry Giles	6-5	306	Sr.		48	Sedric Jones	6-4	243	So.
TE	80	Stephen Alexander	6-4	230	Sr.	OLB	84	Dale Allen	6-2	208	So.
-or-	86	Jason Freeman	6-3	238	Jr.		31	Brandon Berg	6-2	208	Fr.
FL	3	Jarrail Jackson	5-8	181	So.	LCB	2	Mike Woods	5-11	180	So.
	10	Gerald Williams	6-3	188	Jr.		21	Ramon Burroughs	5-11	164	Sr.
QB	12	Justin Fuente	6-2	230	So.	SS	13	Terry White	5-10	192	Jr.
-or-	1	Eric Moore	6-0	175	Jr.		8	Brandon Daniels	5-10	213	So.
FB	30	Jermaine Fazande	6-0	259	Jr.	FS	29	Gana Joseph	6-0	202	So.
	20	Michael Rose	5-11	238	Sr.		47	Rodney Rideau	5-10	195	So.
HB	33	DeMond Parker	5-10	182	So.	RC	4	Pee Wee Woods	5-8	180	So.
	34	Bennie Butler	6-0	208	So.		7	Cedric Stephens	5-9	185	Jr.
PK	15	Jeremy Alexander	5-10	181	Sr.	P	86	Jason Freeman	6-3	238	Jr.

Players with starting experience in bold



OKLAHOMA STATE

For the past two seasons, Oklahoma State coach Bob Simmons has felt much like an unemployed accountant. • He hasn't had any numbers to work with. • NCAA sanctions swallowed scholarships in the early 1990s. Making matters worse, former Cowboy coach Pat Jones dipped heavily into junior college personnel following a winless season in '91, mortgaging the future for a quick fix. • So when Simmons came aboard, OSU's depth chart barely pierced the surface. Solid recruiting classes have changed that. • For the first time in recent memory, Simmons can look at a roster three-deep at every slot. • "We have a lot more depth at several positions because we were able to redshirt part of that second class," Simmons said.



"It takes repetition. It takes competition. When a kid is looking over his shoulder, he knows he has to do the job or it isn't his anymore. If we can keep those classes together, we should have better results."

OSU has climbed the ladder under Simmons, going 4-8 his rookie season and 5-6 a year ago. But for the Cowboys to reach the next rung, they must resuscitate a lifeless run defense.

OSU gave up 225.4 yards per game on the ground, ranking 10th in the conference and 97th nationally. The weakness helped account for an 0-4 record away from home and embarrassments like a 71-14 beating at Texas, OSU's worst loss since 1970.

"You can only point to your players for so long," said Simmons, a former defensive aide at Colorado, West Virginia and Toledo. "We as coaches and I as the head coach have to take that responsibility, get the play called, get the right players and make sure we are fundamentally sound. When you're defensive-minded and you don't see that being done, you're not pleased."

"Defense wins championships. You have to get the ball for your offense to score points. We have not done that in the two years I've been here. For us to get over the hump, the defense

With questions at quarterback, more of the offensive load will be squarely on tailback Andre Richardson's shoulders.

has to show some sign of improvement."

That may not be a stretch in 1997.

The Cowboys hired two new faces to oversee an alignment switch put in near the close of last season. Joining the staff with defensive line coach Calvin Miller is co-defensive coordinator and former NFL aide Rob Ryan, son of former Arizona Cardinals and Philadelphia Eagles coach Buddy Ryan.

"He brings an extremely aggressive background from the NFL," said Simmons, whose club last season finished 2-6 in the inaugural season of the Big 12 Conference action. "They do things different in college. But the attitude he brings I like."

So do the players.

"All spring the front seven was making most of the plays," sophomore inside linebacker Kenyatta Wright said. "We hardly got anything broke on us."

"Coach Ryan loves to blitz and we love to blitz. So we love it. We feel like we can take control of the other team's offense."

With the Cowboys, Ryan will coach a four-man front installed the final three games of the season. Previously, OSU had gone with three down linemen.

Few pressure a defense like OSU's All-America candidate Alonzo Mayes.

At 6-foot-6, 265 pounds, tight end Mayes is as graceful as he is large. He earned All-Big 12 honors a year ago after catching 30 passes for 512 yards and three touchdowns.

"He is very rare," Simmons said. "There aren't many in the country who have his

STRENGTHS:

For a team that has been hard pressed to find enough quality athletes to field a team in recent years, going into the 1997 season loaded (and three deep at some positions) is the biggest advantage this team has.

WEAKNESSES:

The Cowboys may be three-deep at quarterback, but there isn't much experience. Chris Chaloupka is the veteran after playing in only six games and attempting 45 passes. It's hard to imagine that Tone Jones would be missed.

size and his ability and his speed. You get a big guy like that and it is a blessing for your program."

Mayes' forte is running after the catch. But OSU has to get it to him first. Given the Cowboys' predicament at quarterback, that is harder than it sounds.

Tone Jones left behind a 1996 passing percentage of 55.6 percent and three and a half years worth of starts.

Battling it out will be three unproven underclassmen: redshirt sophomore Chris Chaloupka, senior Joe Phears and redshirt freshman Tony Lindsay. Joining the fold in the fall will be Tulsa freshman B.J. Tiger. The quarterback derby produced no winner in the spring and could drag out well into '97.

Chaloupka has the most experience, having played in six games and completed 15-of-45 passes (33.3 percent) for a touchdown and an interception. A former JUCO standout, Phears competed in one game before elbow problems forced him to take a medical redshirt. The 6-2 Lindsay, who broke several long runs in the spring, is the best athlete.

"It's going to be heated," Lindsay said of the quarterback competition. "Not picking a starting quarterback at the end of spring will make us work harder in the off-season."

The motivation for Andre Richardson is history.

With names like Barry Sanders, Thurman Thomas, Terry Miller and David Thompson, OSU is to tailbacks what Nike is to footwear.

Thompson's departure means Richardson will be carrying the ball — not to mention the torch.

Richardson averaged 118 carries and 740 yards rushing his first two seasons, but his playing time plummeted dramatically a year ago (89 carries for 447 yards).

OSU features several adequate receivers, led by the likes of juniors Terrance Richardson (29 catches, 376 yards), Willie Grissom (20 for 225) and Sean Love (6 for 101). But the Cowboys lack the overall 'burner' who can beat secondaries deep.

Graduation took only one starter on the offensive line, which returns proven players in Josh Henson, Jeremy Offutt, Reynell Lavigne and Adam Davis, who missed the final six games with a broken leg. Former defensive lineman Kevin Kemp, a 6-6, 300-pounder, also will move to that side of the ball. Academics sidelined senior mainstay Calvin Menephee, but the senior tackle is scheduled to be available in the fall.

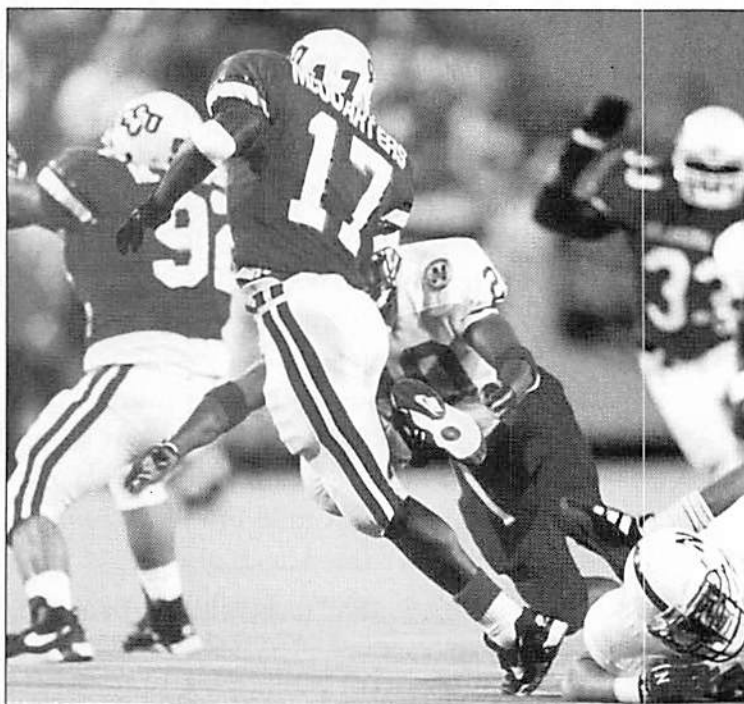
Depth is the buzzword on defense, which returns six players and several converts.

"The depth really says a lot," said junior free safety R.W. McQuarters, who missed four and a half games a year ago with a broken leg. "Last year a lot of guys were playing for the first time. They would get winded and we didn't have anybody to bring off the bench."

An All-Big Eight kick returner two years ago, McQuarters headlines what appears to be a solid unit. Ricky Thompson joins a secondary that includes three-year lettermen Kevin Williams and young upstarts such as Alvin

Porter and J.B. Flowers.

As freshmen, Wright and fellow linebacker Raymond Cato topped the team in tackles last season. Also expected to make significant contributions at the position are Tarrell Knauls, Justin Thomas and Jack Golden, a former tight end who opened eyes in the spring.



Harry Lentz, Jr.

After making a name for himself against Nebraska as a freshman, R.W. McQuarters has become one of the most dangerous athletes in the Big 12 Conference.

JUCO transfers such as Alton Weaver (6-5, 275) were recruited to shore up the line, which returns starters Denshio Cook and Brandon Ashley and could be OSU's strength. Simmons also reserves high praise for redshirt freshman Eric

Stevenson, a former fullback who has grown into the defensive end position at 275 pounds.

The biggest reason the defense will be improved, however, is the return of defensive lineman Jamal Williams.

An academic casualty in 1996, Williams as a redshirt freshman was second among Cowboy linemen in tackles (73) and runner-up on the team in sacks (six).

"He has to go to class and do the things we ask him to do in the program," Simmons said of the former schoolboy from Washington D.C. "If he can't do those things, he won't be here, but is he a difference-maker? Yes. It's very obvious when you watch him scrimmage that you have something special."

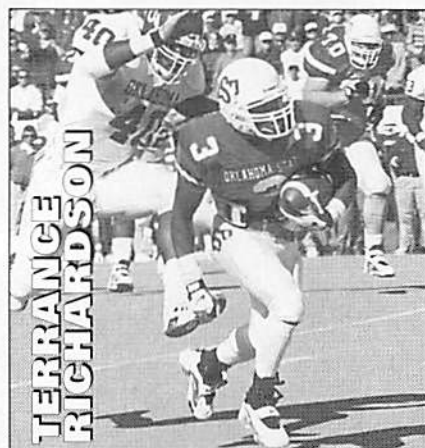
OSU's punting remains in excellent shape with senior Jason Davis, whose 43.3-yard average a year ago was the fourth-best single-season effort in school history.

But the place-kicking is up in the air, with sophomore incumbent Tim Syndes battling it out with walk-ons Seth Condeley and Russ Schwettmann. ■ — Rhett Morgan

Defense wins championships. You have to get the ball for your offense to score points. We have not done that in the two years I've been here.

**— Bob Simmons
OSU coach**

COWBOYS AT A GLANCE



TERRANCE RICHARDSON

Harry Lentz, Jr.

1997 SCHEDULE

Aug. 30	@ Iowa State
Sept. 6	@ SW Louisiana
Sept. 13	Fresno State
Sept. 27	NE Louisiana
Oct. 4	Texas
Oct. 11	Colorado
Oct. 25	Missouri
Nov. 1	@ Texas A&M
Nov. 8	@ Oklahoma
Nov. 15	Texas Tech
Nov. 22	@ Baylor



OSU'S KEYS TO SUCCESS

TAKING A LICKING

Can the 1994 Big Eight Freshman of the Year carry the load as the Cowboys' top tailback? Andre Richardson has put up respectable numbers as a backup (he only needs 74 yards to break the 2,000 yard mark for his career). But because of his stature (5-8, 190), you've got to wonder if he can take the beating that comes with the job.

CLASS ACTION

Defensive lineman Jamal Williams, an academic casualty in 1996, is good enough to make the Cowboys line one of the best in the conference. But he'll go from difference maker to spectator if he can't find his way to class this fall.

SCHEDULE CONFLICT

A weak non-conference schedule (Southwestern Louisiana, Fresno State and Northeast Louisiana) could pad the Cowboy record, but does it really provide the experience OSU needs to get better in the league?

1996 RESULTS

5-6
CONFERENCE FINISH: 2-6 (5th South)

A 31	SW Missouri	W, 23-20 (OT)
S 7	vs. Texas Tech*	L, 3-31
S 14	Tulsa	W, 30-9
S 21	Utah State	W, 31-17
O 5	@ Texas	L, 14-71
O 12	@ Colorado	L, 13-35
O 19	Iowa State	W, 28-27
O 26	@ Missouri	L, 28-35 (OT)
N 2	Texas A&M	L, 19-38
N 9	Oklahoma	L, 17-27
N 23	Baylor	W, 37-17

* Texas Stadium • Irving, Texas

TOP RETURNERS

RUSHING	Gms.	Att.	Yds.	YPC	YPG	TD
Richardson, A.	11	89	447	5.0	40.6	3
Brown, K.	11	31	151	4.9	13.7	0
Aikins, B.	11	20	101	5.1	9.2	2
Simmons, N.	11	17	57	3.4	5.2	0
Coleman, T.	9	2	29	14.5	3.2	0
Halferty, J.	3	1	2	2.0	0.7	0
Chaloupka, C.	6	6	-25	-4.2	-4.2	0

PASSING	Gms.	Att-Cp-Int	Yds.	YPG	TD
Chaloupka, C.	6	45-15-1	269	44.8	1
Phears, J.	1	2-1-0	8	8.0	0

RECEIVING	Gms.	Rec.	Yds.	YPC	YPG	TD
Mayes, A.	10	30	512	17.1	51.2	3
Richardson, T.	11	29	376	13.0	34.2	2
Grissom, W.	11	20	225	11.3	20.5	1
Richardson, A.	11	11	108	9.8	9.8	2

OKLAHOMA STATE TENTATIVE DEPTH CHART (FOLLOWING SPRING DRILLS)

WR	80	Willie Grissom	5-11	190	Jr.	DE	56	Brandon Ashley	6-5	255	Sr.
	4	Sean Love	5-11	180	Jr.		95	Alton Weaver	6-5	275	Sr.
LT	75	David Camacho	6-8	310	Sr.	DT	93	Denshio Cook	6-4	280	So.
	77	Andrew Golembiewski	6-5	265	So.		90	Zachary Akin	6-1	225	So.
LG	62	Josh Henson	6-2	250	Sr.	DT	92	Cortney Mallory	6-3	255	So.
	72	Blaine Cook	6-4	255	So.		99	Jamal Williams	6-3	255	Sr.
C	60	Reynell Lavigne	6-1	270	So.	DE	42	Andrel Waddle	6-2	225	Jr.
	73	Josh Lind	6-7	250	So.		99	Taber LeBlanc	6-3	235	Jr.
RG	78	Adam Davis	6-6	240	So.	LB	32	Tarrell Knauls	6-3	230	Jr.
	79	George Arceo	6-5	295	Sr.		37	Justin Thomas	6-3	220	So.
RT	70	Jeremy Offutt	6-5	260	Jr.	LB	7	Kenyatta Wright	6-2	225	So.
	69	Kevin Kemp	6-6	300	So.		44	Billy Stone	6-1	230	Jr.
TE	85	Alonzo Mayes	6-6	265	Sr.	LB	22	Raymond Cato	6-1	220	Jr.
	87	Greg Brown	6-2	230	Jr.		54	Josh Green	6-0	220	Jr.
WR	3	Terrance Richardson	5-10	190	Jr.	CB	9	Alvin Porter	6-0	180	So.
	18	Tank Coleman	5-9	170	So.		2	Maurice Simpson	6-0	190	So.
QB	8	Chris Chaloupka	6-3	195	So.	FS	17	R.W. McQuarters	5-11	190	Jr.
-or-	11	Joe Phears	6-2	200	Sr.		6	Chris Thompson	6-3	195	Jr.
TB	25	Andre Richardson	5-9	190	Sr.	SS	31	Chris Carter	6-3	190	So.
	1	Nathan Simmons	5-10	190	So.		15	Adam Edwards	6-2	200	So.
FB	45	Brian Aikins	6-1	245	Jr.	CB	29	J.B. Flowers	6-2	190	So.
	30	Kevin Brown	6-2	240	So.		5	Kevin Williams	6-0	186	Sr.
PK	14	Tim Sydes	6-2	180	So.	P	20	Jason Davis	6-0	215	Sr.

Players with starting experience in bold



BAYLOR

First-year Baylor coach Dave Roberts sees plenty of similarities between his new school and the last school where he coached, Notre Dame. • For example, the former offensive coordinator for the Irish points out that both schools are well-known, Christian-based private institutions with strong academic traditions. Both schools also are located in medium-sized towns within a short driving distance of large metropolitan areas, and so forth. • On the football field, however, even Roberts readily admits that the similarities between the two schools come to a screeching halt once you get past the color of helmets. • Notre Dame, which seems to recruit one of the top classes nationally every year, never seems to be short on talent.

6th
SOUTH
DIVISION

Baylor, despite some highly publicized recruiting classes under Chuck Reedy in recent years, has some of the best athletes in Waco.

The Bears' cupboard isn't completely bare, but it's a long way from being fully stocked with top Division I-A talent.

"The two schools are similar," says Roberts, who was Lou Holtz's offensive coordinator/quarterbacks coach at Notre Dame from 1994-96. "But we're certainly not loaded with great athletes here. We have some good kids, but we don't have a lot of speed, and we're pretty undersized."

"I think some of the recruiting (ratings) may have been a little overblown. Talent-wise, we're a long way from being where we need to be. It's an understatement to say we've got an awful lot of work to do."

No question about that. The Bears (4-7 overall last year) are coming off their worst season since 1978. And Baylor's 1-7 Big 12 record in 1996 was the school's worst conference mark since 1973 — Grant Teaff's second year in Waco.

In reality, it could have been worse. Baylor opened the season 3-0 by beating non-conference foes Louisiana Tech, Louisville and Oregon State. Once the con-

ference season began, however, the Bears were outscored by Big 12 opponents by 95 points (281-186).

For the most part, Baylor's problems in 1996 were attributed to defense, a hard pill for BU fans to swallow since outstanding defenses have become somewhat of a trademark for the Bears. In 1995, for example, Baylor ranked fifth nationally in total defense, surrendering an average of just 263.9 yards and 15.1 points per game.

But in 1996, the Baylor defense was more generous than the Salvation Army at Christmas. The Bears yielded almost 470 yards per game, including an average of 286.6 on the ground.

Texas Tech had 624 yards against the Bears; Nebraska rolled up 669; and Oklahoma State's David Thompson rushed for 321 yards by himself.

As a result, Baylor's defense almost dropped off the college football map, finishing 105th overall and 111th against the run.

"We're obviously going to have to do a better job against the run this year if we're going to have any kind of success," Roberts said. "We're switching defenses to a 4-3, and we'll get eight, nine, 10 or 11 men on the line of scrimmage. Even if we don't cover the pass, we'll stop the run."

"Of course, I'm kidding about not covering the pass, but we will work very hard on stopping the run. We just cannot let people rush for a bunch of yards on us."

Offensively, the Bears weren't much better in 1996. Baylor averaged 23.25

STRENGTHS:

With the return of Jerod Douglas and the diverse talents of Darrell Bush, Elijah Burkins and Dexter Ford, the strength of Baylor's team should be its running game. Unfortunately for the Bears' tailbacks, Dave Roberts plans to have an offensive philosophy similar to BYU's.

WEAKNESSES:

There's a pretty big selection here, but probably the most glaring problem is at quarterback. Jeff Watson and Jermaine Alfred are solid players, but not Division I-A starters.

The jury is still out on whether Jeff Watson will be capable of running an offense that will compare to BYU's.

points per game in conference play last year, but when you subtract the point production against North Division cellar dwellers Iowa State (a 49-21 win) and Missouri (a 42-49 triple overtime loss), the Bears averaged just over 15 points per game.

And with a hellacious schedule facing the 1997 Bears, things could get much worse before they get better. Baylor's soft non-conference schedule in 1996 is replaced by a season opener at home against Miami and consecutive road games at Fresno State and Michigan.

Overall, Baylor faces five teams in 1997 that went to bowl games (Miami, Michigan, Texas Tech, Nebraska and Texas). And two of the opponents who did not attend bowl games last year have been particularly brutal on the Bears.

Baylor has never beaten Oklahoma (0-6) and hasn't beaten Texas A&M since 1985. It all adds up to a potentially long season for the Bears.

So, Roberts, who has 10 years head coaching experience at Western Kentucky and Northeast Louisiana, enters his first year at Baylor with guarded optimism and extremely conservative goals.

"Our goals?," Roberts pondered. "Well, our first goal is to get out of the huddle without running into each other. Our second will be to get the ball into our quarterback's hands. After that, we'll just see how it goes."

On the bright side, the Bears do have 15 returning starters from last year, including one of the better running backs in the Big 12. Tailback Jerod Douglas returns for his senior season after an injury-plagued 1996.

Despite a series of injuries that limited his playing time, Douglas rushed for 667 yards, placing him third on Baylor's all-time rushing list with 2,254 yards. If he can stay healthy, Roberts says he believes Douglas can return to his 1995 form when the San Antonio native gained 1,594 all-purpose yards and was named to the All-Southwest Conference team at tailback and as a kick returner.

"I love what I've seen from Jerod Douglas," Roberts said. "He's not real big (5-8, 180), but he has a great work ethic and a tremendous attitude. I think he can have a great season as a tailback and a kick returner. He gives us a chance to have a big play every time he touches the ball. I'd like to have plenty more just like him."

Unfortunately for the Bears, there aren't many more proven game-breakers on the roster. Baylor's two starting quarterbacks from a year ago, senior Jeff Watson and junior Jermaine Alfred, are average at best.

Perhaps the most talented quarterback on campus, redshirt freshman Odell James, underwent reconstructive knee surgery last year and sat

Our goals? Well, our first goal is to get out of the huddle without running into each other. After that, we'll just see how it goes.

**— Dave Roberts
Baylor head coach**

out this spring. James was one of the most highly regarded recruits ever to sign with Baylor, but Roberts can only guess about his college capabilities.

"Odell looks good on the sidelines, but that's about all I can comment on right now," Roberts said. "Hopefully, he'll be healthy this fall, and we'll have outstanding competition at quarterback. With our offensive philosophy, we have to develop a good quarterback."

"We hope to have an offense comparable to BYU's in that

we'll throw often and line up in a variety of sets. You'll see no backs in the backfield and three or four receivers to one side. We need to do things that will stretch the defense."

Roberts is concerned about a lack of speed among the receivers, which prompted him to move junior Nikia Codie from the starting free safety to wide receiver. Highly touted running back Elijah Burkins may also move to wide receiver. Sophomore Mark Cogdill, junior Morris Anderson and junior Derrius Thompson are expected to play key roles in the Bears' pass-oriented offense as well.

Perhaps the best returning receiver on the team is tight end Bradley Domel, who received honorable mention All-Big 12 honors last year after catching 12 passes for 111 yards and one touchdown.

The offensive line returns three starters (juniors Kelvin Garmon and Chris Sampy and senior Michael Johnson). The offensive front could be solid, but there is considerable concern about a lack of depth.

Defensively, the Bears lose their two best players from 1996, in linebacker Dean Jackson and cornerback George McCullough. But the biggest area of concern may be the defensive front.

Battling injuries has become a tougher challenge than racking up big yardage for senior tailback Jerod Douglas.

End Dwight Johnson is the only returning starter after Roberts moved Derrick Fletcher into the offensive line, making the Bears painfully thin up

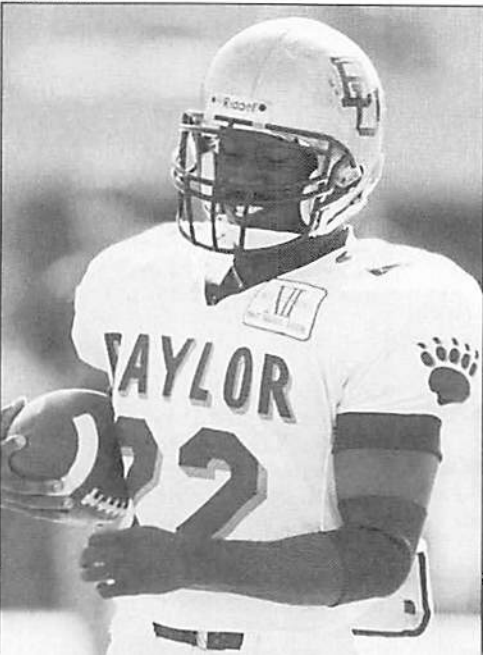
front, especially since Baylor is moving from a 3-4 to a 4-3 defensive alignment. Roberts has moved offensive lineman Anthony Williams, who started at center last year, and fullback Clifton Rubin to the defensive line, but the Bears could be forced to rely on several incoming freshmen up front.

For that matter, a number of players in Roberts' first recruiting class could see considerable action this year. After all, 1997 definitely has the look of a rebuilding year.

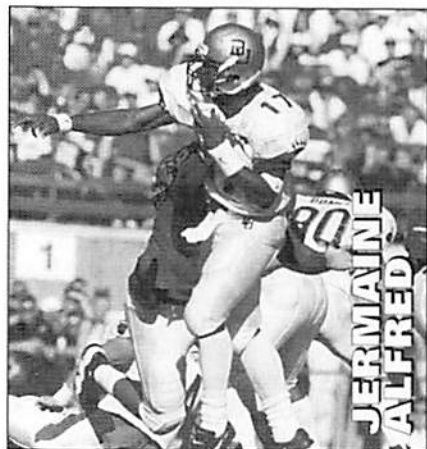
"We're going to set our standards very high," Roberts said.

"And eventually, I feel confident that we're going to get to where we need to be." ■ — Rusty Burson

Jon Waller



BEARS AT A GLANCE



Jon Waller

BAYLOR'S KEYS TO SUCCESS

SOFT AND CUDDLY

Baylor is going to have to do a better job of stopping the run in 1997. The Bears have long been known for having an imposing defense. But last year, the Bears were more like teddy bears against the run. The Bears dropped 100 spots from 1995 (fifth nationally) to 105 in 1996 in total defense.

LATE BLOOMERS

Dave Roberts got into the recruiting game late after the firing of Chuck Reedy, but did a solid job of luring talent to Baylor. True freshmen Mickey Jones, Terry Nichols, Demetrio Phillips and numerous other newcomers could see extensive playing time this fall.

OFF-FIELD FRUSTRATION

With a monster schedule, the Bears will fight their biggest battles in the locker room. Losing usually breeds anger. So it will be important for Roberts to establish a mindset early and keep the team focused on the bigger picture and not the scoreboard.

1996 RESULTS

4-7
CONFERENCE FINISH: 1-7 (6th South)

S 7	@ Louisiana Tech	W, 24-16
S 14	@ Louisville	W, 14-13
S 21	Oregon State	W, 42-10
O 5	@ Texas Tech	L, 24-45
O 12	@ Nebraska	L, 0-49
O 19	Oklahoma	L, 24-28
O 26	Iowa State	W, 49-21
N 2	@ Texas	L, 23-28
N 9	Texas A&M	L, 7-24
N 16	Missouri	L, 42-49 (3OT)
N 23	@ Oklahoma State	L, 17-37

1997 SCHEDULE

Aug. 30	Miami
Sept. 6	@ Fresno State
Sept. 20	@ Michigan
Oct. 4	Texas Tech
Oct. 11	Nebraska
Oct. 18	@ Oklahoma
Oct. 25	@ Iowa State
Nov. 1	Texas
Nov. 8	@ Texas A&M
Nov. 15	@ Missouri
Nov. 22	Oklahoma State

TOP RETURNERS

RUSHING	Gms.	Att.	Yds.	YPC	YPG	TD
Douglas, J.	9	117	667	5.7	74.1	5
Burkins, E.	10	82	393	4.8	39.3	3
Ford, D.	11	75	363	4.8	33.0	4
Rubin, C.	9	32	104	3.3	11.6	3
Overstreet, A.	4	13	44	3.4	11.0	0

PASSING	Gms.	Att.	Cp-Int	Yds.	YPG	TD
Alfred, J.	10	184	90-5	1148	114.8	8
Watson, J.	6	127	67-3	858	143.0	10

RECEIVING	Gms.	Rec.	Yds.	YPC	YPG	TD
Anderson, M.	7	13	163	12.5	23.3	2
Cogdill, M.	3	13	159	12.2	53.0	2
Domel, B.	10	12	111	9.3	11.1	1
Ford, D.	11	10	163	16.3	148.8	1
Chmelar, C.	7	9	84	9.3	12.0	1
Douglas, J.	9	9	81	9.0	9.0	0

BAYLOR TENTATIVE DEPTH CHART (FOLLOWING SPRING DRILLS)

WR	23	Derrius Thompson	6-2	205	So.	LE	58	Glen Coy	6-4	245	Sr.
	88	Gerald Patterson	6-1	211	Sr.		48	Charles Foster	6-1	235	So.
QT	79	David Davis	6-3	315	Sr.	LT	82	Dwight Johnson	6-4	260	So.
	73	Larry McRae	6-4	272	So.		91	James Calvin	6-2	280	So.
OG	59	Kelvin Garmon	6-1	290	Jr.	RT	55	Chris Sampsy	6-0	262	Jr.
	74	Brian Sutton	6-2	262	So.		75	Ellis Cotton	6-3	285	Fr.
C	53	Danny Fletcher	6-6	338	Jr.	RE	83	Justin Snow	6-3	235	So.
	54	Toby Summers	6-1	250	So.		31	Clifton Rubin	6-1	225	Sr.
SG	69	Michael Johnson	6-3	292	Sr.	SLB	20	Clarence Cruse	6-3	220	Jr.
	54	Toby Summers	6-1	250	So.		12	McKinley Bowie	6-2	238	Fr.
ST	99	Derrick Fletcher	6-6	338	Jr.	MLB	40	Jody Littleton	6-1	230	Sr.
	76	Carlos Rocha	6-2	286	So.		41	Kris Micheaux	6-1	225	Fr.
TE	80	Bradley Domel	6-3	225	Sr.	WLB	37	Kenyada Parker	6-1	200	Jr.
	83	Chad Chmelar	6-3	233	Jr.		55	Jason Jackson	6-0	210	So.
QB	7	Jeff Watson	5-11	215	Sr.	CB		Joe Manor	5-10	160	Sr.
	17	Jermaine Alfred	6-2	216	Jr.		4	Daniel Wilturner	5-7	165	Fr.
FB	27	Anthony Overstreet	5-11	218	Sr.	FS	46	Curtis Henderson	5-9	180	Jr.
		Robert Jackson	5-10	245	So.		21	Darwin Scott	5-11	180	Fr.
TB	22	Jerod Douglas	5-8	180	Sr.	SS	21	Sean Armistead	5-10	160	So.
	6	Darrell Bush	5-8	186	Fr.		14	Rodney Smith	6-0	208	So.
WR	7	Nikia Codie	6-3	195	Jr.	RC	4	Robert Neal	5-8	175	So.
	9	Morris Anderson	6-2	190	Jr.		15	Matt Anderson	5-10	190	Sr.
PK		Matt Bryant	5-8	165	Jr.	P	33	Kyle Atteberry	6-0	172	So.

Players with starting experience in bold

W

hen officials from the Pigskin Classic first approached Nebraska last winter about playing in the pre-season football game, the Huskers showed an immediate interest. After all, an early-season showdown

against a top-quality opponent would be an ideal test in order to get ready for tough road games later in the year.

Nebraska had difficulty finding a team willing to come to Lincoln and face the Cornhuskers.

But guess what? That scenario has played out many times before.

Need proof? Take a look at Nebraska's 1997 non-conference schedule and take a quick peek at who the Huskers open the season against. You'll find Akron and Central Florida — not exactly a schedule-maker's dream.

Before you start to make fun of Nebraska's schedule, consider the history. Akron and Central Florida weren't even on the slate as early as two years ago, but when Arkansas and Northern Illinois backed out of agreements to face Nebraska, Husker officials were literally left scrambling to find two opponents —

any opponents — to round out the schedule.

Nebraska does face a formidable challenge before heading into Big 12 Conference action this fall. On Sept. 20, the Huskers travel to Seattle to face Washington at Husky Stadium.

Here's a look at Nebraska's three 1997 non-conference opponents.



AKRON

Last season, Akron finished the year with a 4-7 record and tied for sixth in the Mid-American Conference with a 3-5 mark against league foes. The Zips opened the year with four straight losses — including a 21-18 setback to Virginia Tech — but won three of their last four games.

The season was a growing process for a young Akron squad, according to coach Lee Owens.

"We learned to overcome adversity," Owens said.

Good thing. Virginia Tech and Miami may no longer be on Akron's schedule, but the Zips will open the 1997 campaign by facing national-power Nebraska on Aug. 30 in

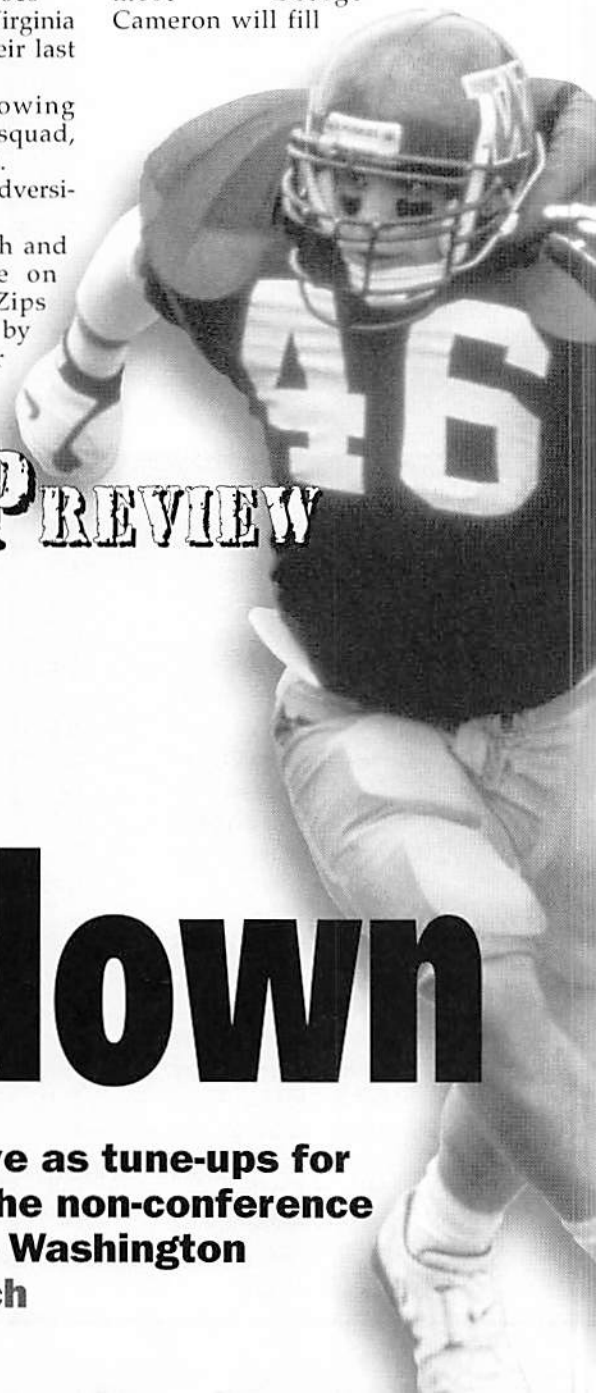
Lincoln.

One thing in Akron's favor heading into 1997 is that nine starters on defense are back, including senior linebacker Nate Boyd. The Zips gave up just 317.4 yards per contest a year ago, which ranked third in the MAC and tied for 26th nationally.

Boyd, who missed spring practice to rest his ailing back, was in on 140 tackles last fall from his middle linebacker spot.

The Zips' secondary will benefit from the play of another linebacker. Outside backer Nate Johnson switched to strong safety during spring practice and all he did was win the starting job heading into fall drills. Eric Small will replace Johnson at linebacker, and sophomore

George Cameron will fill



NON-CONFERENCE PREVIEW

Seattle Showdown

Akron and Central Florida will serve as tune-ups for the Huskers' biggest challenge of the non-conference schedule when they travel to Washington

By Mark Derowitsch

Bruising fullback Chris Rooney averaged 5.3 yards per carry on 79 attempts for 421 yards last fall for the Zips.

in at the other outside linebacker spot.

Johnson will join cornerbacks George Germany and Jon Eaton and free safety Andre McCray in the secondary this fall. McCray made 109 tackles a year ago — second only to Boyd.

Owens said Johnson's position switch solidifies an already impressive secondary. A year ago, the Zips' defense was 25th in the country in pass efficiency even though they picked off only seven passes.

"With Nate Johnson's move back there, the whole group in the secondary is pretty good," Owens said.

The defensive line is an area of concern, according to Owens. Senior tackle Tarik West made just 38 tackles last year, but was solid by season's end. Junior tackle Jamey Bennett stands just 6-feet and weighs 270 pounds. The ends will be senior Corey Christian and sophomore Ron Smith. Smith moves into the starting lineup to replace graduated senior Jason Taylor, who led the squad with 10 sacks a year ago.

Akron's offense isn't nearly as experienced as its defense. Five starters return, but the Zips are thin at wide receiver and running back heading into the fall. Not that Owens doesn't have players who could step up and fill the bill.

Converted running back Terrel Dixon won the starting job at split end while Carl Whitt and Willie Spencer are fighting it out at the other receiver spot. Spencer was Akron's opening-day quarterback last season while Whitt was third on the team in receiving with 14 receptions for 237 yards and one touchdown.

"Both Willie Spencer and Terrel Dixon showed some improvements," Owens said.

Chuck Webb will start at tight end.

At tailback, sophomore Mike Lagasse will open fall camp with the first team. He played in just six games a year ago and rushed for 209

All-American strongside linebacker Jason Chorak set a pair of Husky single-season records in 1996 with 14.5 sacks and 22 tackles for loss.



yards. Sophomore Bo Hunter and junior Greg Lomax will press for playing time. Chris Rooney and Jamie Reader will split time at fullback.

Sophomore quarterback Greg Gromek came out of a redshirt year and led the Zips to three wins in the final four weeks of the season. In his first start, Gromek led the Zips to a 10-7 win against Miami. He completed 28-of-81 passes for 464 yards and two touchdowns, but he was picked off five times.

Three starters return on the Zips' offensive line: tackle Steve Hale (6-3, 320), guard Kevin Kuntz (6-4, 275) and guard Dan Wessman (6-2, 305). But the line gave up 22 sacks a year ago.



The Golden Knights jumped into NCAA Division I-A football last year and, for the most part, have been willing to take on just about anyone.

For example, Central Florida in Year Two will travel to face Mississippi, South Carolina, Auburn and Mississippi State. That's a pretty decent schedule right there. Throw in a trip to Lincoln on Sept. 13 to face Nebraska, and the Golden Knights may have one of the toughest roads in all of football.

But there is a downside to playing such a tough schedule.

"While we should be a better football team than we were last year, the schedule is enough better that nobody may be able to figure that out by watching us play," said Central Florida Coach Gene McDowell.

But unlike Akron, the Golden Knights will face Nebraska with a standout quarterback who will

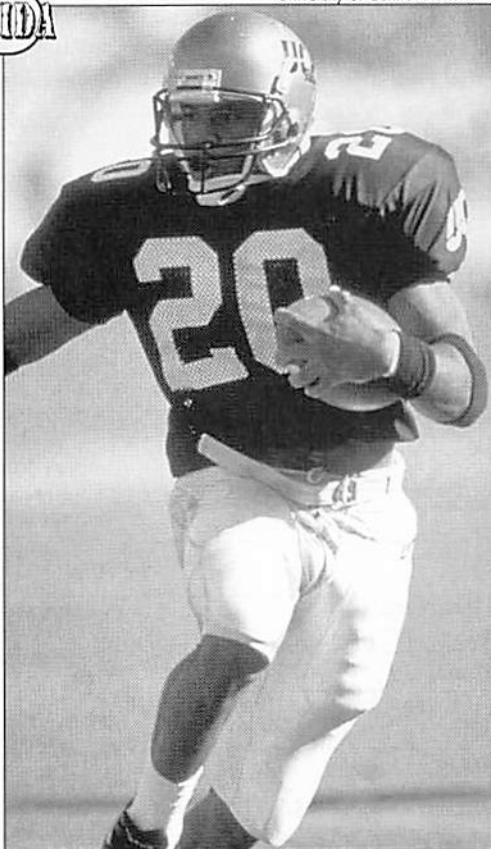
be guiding a capable offense. Junior Daunte Culpepper helped the Golden Knights average more than 275 yards passing per game.

Culpepper threw for 2,565 yards (while completing 187 of 314 passes), 19 touchdowns and 15 interceptions. During the final three games of the season, Culpepper passed for 1,008 yards and eight scores to lead the Golden Knights to victories over Illinois State, Alabama-Birmingham and Bowling Green.

"Daunte Culpepper is the reason why we have a chance to have a good offense," McDowell said.

Todd Cleveland, one of UCF's top returnees at receiver, has the ability to take control of a game and does most of his damage after catching the ball.

University of Central Florida



"Culpepper should be a better quarterback this year than he was last year. He understands the offense better."

Culpepper has plenty of options to go to in the Golden Knights' passing game. Wide receivers Mark Nonsant and Todd Cleveland both return after stellar seasons a year ago. Nonsant led the team with 60 catches for 925 yards and seven touchdowns while Cleveland was next with 59 receptions for 745 yards and six scores.

Tailback Mike Huff, a 5-6 senior speedster, grabbed eight catches for 116 yards and two touchdowns.

"If we do have a great year offensively, it's going to be because people won't be able to contend with our passing game," McDowell said.

Central Florida rushed for just 1,449 yards as a team. Huff gained 289 yards on 77 carries but led the team with six touchdowns on the ground. Fullback Page Sessoms, a reserve last season, touched the ball just five times. Mike Grant, who led the team in rushing with 339 yards, is listed on the fourth team heading into fall drills.

Defensively, the Golden Knights are young, especially up front. Both tackles — Justen Moore and Scott

Dedelow — are sophomores but are surrounded by ends Jameil McWhorter and Jermaine Benoit. Junior tackle Scott Cordrey broke his right ankle during spring practice but may be ready to go when the season begins.

A year ago, the Golden Knights gave up nearly 2,000 yards on the ground, but opponents gained just 3.6 yards per carry against the squad.

"I think at defensive line we have a chance to be better than we were last year," McDowell said. "It depends on how Cordrey's injury turns out."

Central Florida lost all three starting linebackers from last year's squad. Junior Mike Palmer was in on 34 tackles as a backup last year and has earned the starting job at one of the outside linebacker spots.

Free safety Kenton Rickerson led the secondary with two interceptions a year ago. He's one of four starters back. The others are cornerbacks Davin Bush and Reginald Doster and strong safety Donnell Washington.



It's easy to see why Nebraska tried to schedule a game against a traditional power early in the season for the Pigskin Classic in order to get ready for Washington. The Huskers will face the Huskies on Sept. 20 in Seattle.

Washington returns eight starters on both offense and defense and comes off a season in which it finished with a 9-3 record. The Huskies were the Pac-10 representative in the Holiday Bowl, but lost to Colorado 33-21.

The Huskies didn't lose very much in 1996. After opening the season with a 45-42 loss to Arizona State, Washington won nine of its last 10 games to end the year in second in the Pac-10 Conference.

But the Huskies want more. "This is why the team has worked hard and set its goals high," Washington coach Jim Lambright said. "We've asked this team, 'Isn't this where you want to be? Don't you want to be considered a national power? Don't you want to see how many Rose Bowls you can go to?' They have to understand they are only a part of what they have created. You can't be uncomfortable in

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this role."

Against Washington, the Huskers will face another good, young quarterback in Brock Huard. Huard, as a redshirt freshman, started the final eight games of the season when Shane Fortney was sidelined with a knee injury. With Fortney transferring to another school, Huard will open the fall as the top quarterback again.

All Huard did as a freshman in 1996 was throw for 1,678 yards and 13 touchdowns.

"He's a winner," Lambright said of Huard.

He also has talent around him. Tailback Rashaan Shehee rushed for 1,288 yards and 19 touchdowns as a junior in 1996. Departed Corey Dillon gained 1,555 yards on the ground last season, but junior Mike Reed is likely to pick up the slack.

Two of Huard's favorite targets last year were split end Jerome Pathon and flanker Fred Coleman. Pathon caught 56 passes for 818 yards and eight touchdowns while Coleman added 55 receptions for 865 yards and four scores. Tight end Cameron Cleeland returns after a 31-catch season as a junior.

Washington does a good job of protecting Huard. Junior Tony Coats (6-7, 300) started 10 games while 300-pound senior Mostafa Sobhi will start at the other tackle spot. Junior guard Benji Olson has started 22 straight games.

Defensively, the Huskies are solid but must replace linebackers Ink Aleaga and John Fiala. During their college careers, they combined for 50 starts, 509 tackles, 10 fumble recoveries and seven interceptions.

Luckily, senior Jason Chorak, one of the top strongside linebackers in the nation, did return. As a Husky, Chorak has made 99 tackles, 39.5 stops for loss and 18.5 sacks. Last year, he had 14.5 sacks and 22 tackles for loss — both school records. Chorak bypassed a chance to play in the NFL and instead vowed to work in the weight room for his senior season.

"If Jason learns half of the lessons that were there for him last year, he will be able to increase his sack totals just by making the plays he missed last year," Lambright said.

Up front, nose tackle Mac Tuiaea and end Chris Campbell started every game last season.

The secondary is experienced, led by roverback Nigel Burton, who made 55 tackles and also played two games at cornerback. ■

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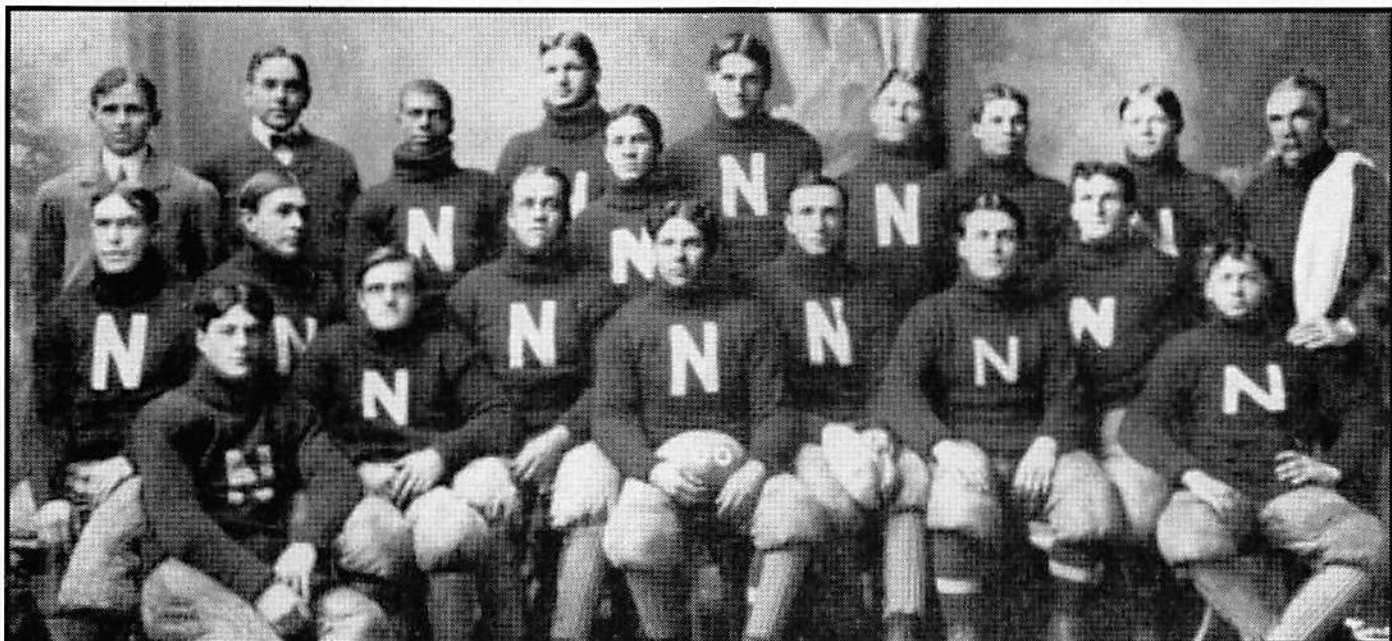
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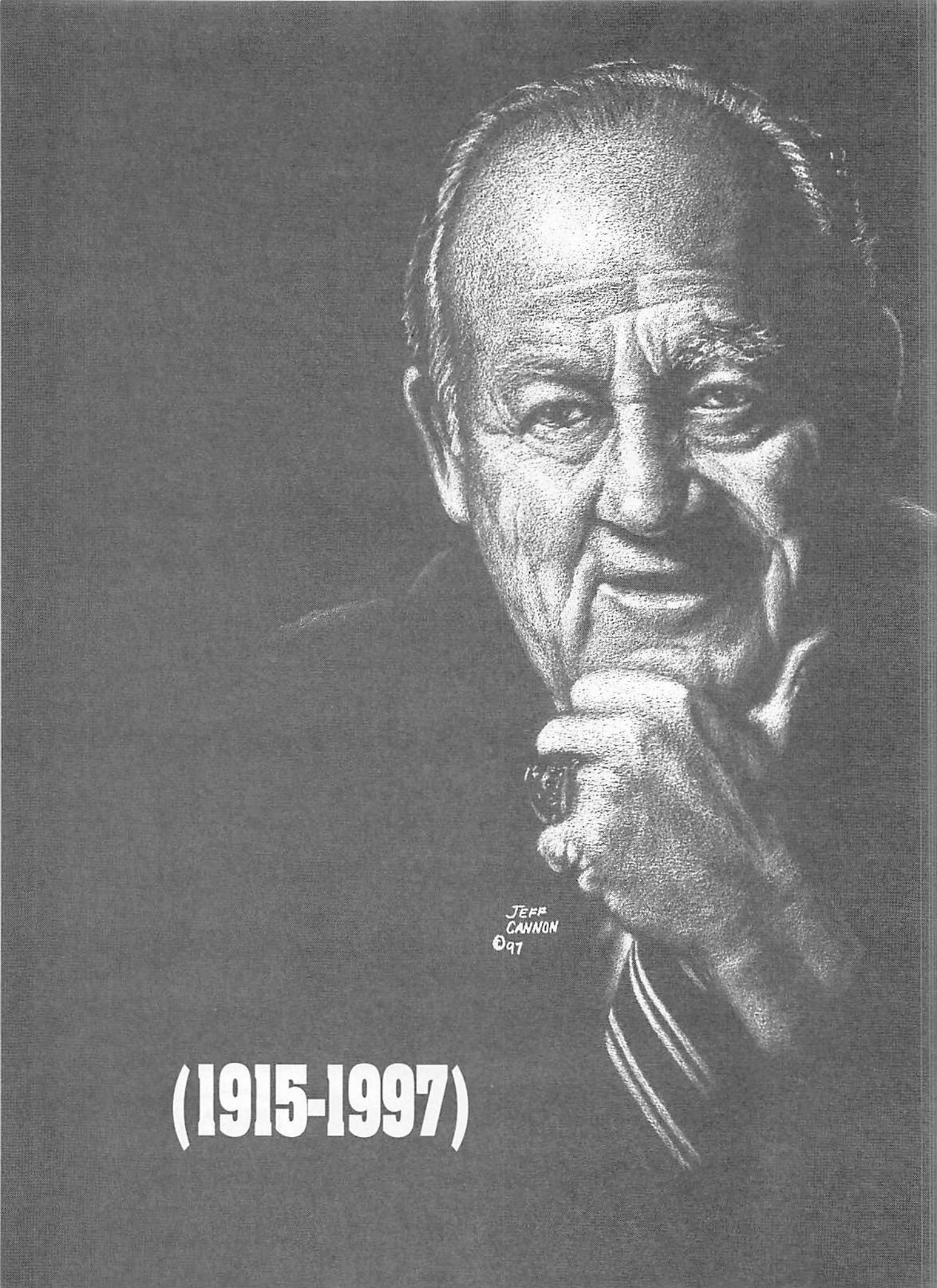
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DEVANEY

His passing left a sadness for those who knew him even casually and a void that will remain for the generation of Cornhusker fans who were his contemporaries

A gentle breeze carried the sounds of laughter from the fellowship hall into the courtyard at the main entrance of Lincoln's First-Plymouth Congregational Church in the late afternoon of May 14.

The sky was clear. The day was vintage spring in Nebraska.

"Where's Jerry Tagge?" Virginia Corgan asked. The wife of the late Mike Corgan charged through the open doors with characteristic energy, back into the reception in the fellowship hall.

Locating Tagge in the crowded room wasn't all that easy.

The quarterback who directed the Nebraska football team to national championships in 1970 and 1971 is a big man. But then, so were many of the other men in the fellowship hall. And their faces were just as

By Mike Babcock

Illustrations by Jeff Cannon

familiar as Tagge's.

"Look around. See all the people 'Coach' has touched," Rich Glover had said earlier.

Glover, who played middle guard on the national championship teams and earned the Outland Trophy and Lombardi Award in 1972, is on the coaching staff of former Cornhusker Tony Samuel at New Mexico State. Samuel also was somewhere to be found in the crowd in the fellowship hall.

The easy laughter both belied and underscored the occasion. The reception followed a memorial service for Bob Devaney, who died of congestive heart failure on May 9.

Devaney would have expected more laughter than tears John Melton said. There were both on this day, as well as on the days following Devaney's death, less than a month after his 82nd birthday.

"He could bring you to tears one way or another," said Gene Huey, a former assistant at Nebraska who now coaches for the NFL's Indianapolis Colts. "It might as well have been laughing."

The memorial service, which followed a private burial service at Lincoln Memorial Park, was broadcast live, statewide, by the Nebraska Educational Television network. It also was carried by five commercial television stations and three radio stations. Even so, an estimated 700 attended.

Devaney "always said that no matter what you do, the size of your funeral would depend on the weather," Tom Osborne said. "I think it was his way of saying: 'It was no big deal.'"

Devaney's death was a big deal, however, leaving a sadness for those who knew him even casually, and a void that will remain for the generation of Cornhusker fans who were his contemporaries.

"He gave us a winning team, but he gave us something extra," Governor Ben Nelson said in a eulogy at the memorial service. "He gave us pride in our state and in ourselves. He gave us something to overcome what (former) Gov. (Frank) Morrison once called 'state inferiority complex.'"

Morrison, the governor in 1961, was among those who attended the memorial service.

What Devaney gave Nebraska went far beyond the success he achieved as football coach, and as athletic director. "He gave us to Nebraska that it hadn't had before — that there were champions there on the Great Plains," "Woody" Varner told the *Ogallala World-Herald*.

Varner came to Nebraska in 1962 to become chancellor of the university. He subsequently became president of the state university system, serving in that capacity until 1977.

Clifford Hardin was the university's chancellor in 1962 when Devaney arrived from Wyoming. Were it not for Hardin, who came to Nebraska from Michigan State, the course of Cornhusker football history probably wouldn't have taken the dramatic turn that it did with the hiring of Devaney.

William Henry Harrison, who preferred to be called the historical "Tippy," was Cornhusker athletic director in 1962. He had just arrived at Nebraska from Wichita University (now Wichita State), and he wanted to bring Hank Foldberg, his football coach at Wichita, along with him.

The coaching position was open following the forced departure of Bill Jennings, who couldn't survive five consecutive losing seasons. Jennings wasn't solely responsible for taking down the program, however. Cornhusker fans had celebrated only three winning seasons since the 1941 Rose Bowl team.

Foldberg, an All-America end on the storied Army teams that included

Glenn Davis and Doc Blanchard, couldn't be persuaded to follow Dye to Nebraska, however, opting to go to Texas A&M, where his coaching tenure was brief (three seasons) and undistinguished (6-23-1 record).

Foldberg's decision to go to College Station, where he also had played one season as a collegian, to be football coach and athletic director left three candidates for the Nebraska job, all from the Skyline Conference: Wyoming's Devaney,

State, Hardin contacted Duffy Daugherty to see if the Spartans' coach might be interested in coming to Nebraska. Daugherty wasn't interested, but he recommended Devaney, who had been a Michigan State assistant for three seasons before going to Wyoming.

Daugherty and Devaney were good friends by then, after having met when Devaney was a high school coach in Michigan and Daugherty was an assistant on



Devaney was more than just a coach to many of his players including Outland and Lombardi winner Rich Glover and Johnny Rodgers, who called Devaney a "stand-in father" for the real one he never knew during his acceptance of the Heisman Trophy in 1972.

Utah State's John Ralston and Utah's Ray Nagel.

Devaney's name wasn't mentioned in newspaper speculation, however, until after Foldberg had rejected the Cornhuskers' offer. After Nagel withdrew his name from consideration, Ralston was quoted as saying he had the impression he was Nebraska's second choice. By then, Devaney was the first.

Because he had been at Michigan

"Biggie" Munn's staff at Michigan State. Daugherty encouraged Munn to hire Devaney the year before Munn stepped down as head coach.

Daugherty succeeded Munn, and two years later, helped Devaney get the Wyoming job.

Devaney was 37-years-old when he joined the Michigan State staff. He had all but decided to give up coaching if he didn't get a college head coach's job by the time he was 40. He had spent 14 years coaching

in Michigan high schools, moving from Big Beaver (in Birmingham) to Keego Harbor to Saginaw and finally to Alpena, where his football teams were a combined 52-9 over seven seasons.

Devaney was born and raised in Saginaw. He was the oldest of three children, but his brothers both died before him. Ralph was killed at Normandy during World War II. Art died in 1969.

He was something of a free spirit as a young man, a quality Devaney retained throughout his life. He briefly lived a kind of Huck Finn existence following his high school graduation in Saginaw, hopping trains during the Depression instead of riding the river. On a trip back to Saginaw from Florida, where he and a high school friend had gone to look for work, Devaney was arrested by railroad police and jailed.

Devaney was jailed again soon after his return to Saginaw, following a fight.

"Bob was an outlaw, and I think he always had a warm spot in his heart for a kid who was an outlaw," Melton told the *Omaha World-Herald* on the day of the memorial service.

That was apparent at the end of his first season at Wyoming. The Cowboys lost their final game in 1957 to archrival Denver, 14-13 at Denver. Afterward, Paul Muratore, one of Devaney's players, was arrested for an altercation with a house detective at the hotel where the team was staying.

Devaney and his assistants were taken before the police magistrate along with Muratore. The magistrate was willing to let everyone go, but the house detective was adamant that Muratore spend the night in jail. Devaney said: "If he goes, we all go." They all spent the night in jail.

Devaney worked in a foundry in Saginaw for three years before deciding he didn't want that as his life's occupation. So he enrolled at nearby Alma College, with an athletic scholarship.

Alma College produced outstanding football teams. Among those who played there were George Allen, who went on to coach in the NFL, and Frank Knox, secretary of the Navy during World War II. Devaney, an end, was the team captain and most valuable player as a senior in 1938.

He "was cheerful, gregarious and full of harmless blarney," a teammate said.

Those qualities served Devaney

well as a coach and recruiter — his pronunciation of "recruit" was distinctive; he always accented the first syllable: "RE-cruit." Jim Walden, who played quarterback for Devaney at Wyoming in 1958 and 1959 and served on his staff at Nebraska in 1971 and 1972, described him as possibly the best recruiter ever. For that reason alone, "on today's market, he would be worth a million dollars a year," Walden told Eric Olson of the *Omaha World-Herald*.

"When he recruited me, after he left my house, I remember thinking: 'I don't know what he said, but I sure do like this guy,'" Tagge told Ken Hambleton of the *Lincoln Journal Star*.

Devaney, who was hired by Nebraska at an annual salary of \$17,000 (Governor Morrison's salary was \$14,000), produced a dramatic turnaround with players Jennings had recruited. But he brought with him an enthusiasm and an understanding of how to motivate young men that had been lacking.

Anyone who played for Devaney would tell you he was a master of motivation. And he didn't always need words, Tagge said in eulogizing Devaney. Sometimes, all it took was a gesture.

Tagge said he could tell by glancing at Devaney if he was playing poorly during a game. "All I had to do was look at the sidelines, and Coach would have his arm around Van Brownson."

Tagge the starter in 1971, shared the job with Brownson in 1969 and 1970.

Tagge spoke on behalf of the players at the memorial service. He talked about how Devaney never stopped being a coach to his former players. "Even at age 80, he was still teaching us, still coaching us," said Tagge, who often traveled with Devaney and Johnny Rodgers to autograph signings.

"I know he loved you very, very much," Tagge said, directing his comments at Devaney's family. "Awards are nice, and there's nothing wrong with fame, and winning is important."

"But that stuff is just a game. And that was what he was trying to teach Johnny and I. On the way back to Lincoln, he would tell us: 'I wished I would have hugged my wife and kids more.' He would say: 'Don't be 80-years-old and look back wishing you had hugged and kissed your wife and kids more.'"

WHAT THEY WERE SAYING

"Bob was one of the greatest football coaches of all time, and he cast a shadow as tall as anyone who has ever coached in this game. He was a close personal friend whom I will always cherish. I have many fond memories from our friendship, and, like anyone who has known Bob, I will certainly miss him."

— Barry Switzer

Former Oklahoma Coach
Current Dallas Cowboys Coach

"I have lost a dear, personal friend and it results in a feeling of numbness and shock to realize that Bob Devaney no longer is a force in Nebraska and intercollegiate athletics. Few, if any men anywhere, have ever contributed more to the pride and determination of a state's people than did Bob Devaney during his long and distinguished service to Nebraska. The Devaney legend and the legacy he left for us all will not be forgotten."

— Don Bryant
Nebraska Associate
Athletic Director

"Nebraska and the nation lost a giant in the world of college football, a dear friend and a national leader today. Bob Devaney's leadership created a football dynasty and an athletic program that is the best in America. Our goal at Nebraska will be to continue the legacy created by Bob. We all will miss him very much."

— Bill Byrne
Nebraska Athletic Director

"When he came to Nebraska, he had two distinct missions. First, he turned around an average football program and made it into the best in the nation. Then, as athletic director, he turned a mediocre athletic department and built it into one of the best all-around athletic programs in the country. His energy, enthusiasm and drive shaped our athletic department. For a lot of people, especially the coaches under him, he was a sort of father figure. We looked to him for guidance and support, and he always showed great loyalty to his staff."

— Terry Pettit
Nebraska Volleyball Coach



Osborne also acknowledged that, in one of a couple of instances when he had difficulty finishing the thought because of the emotion it evoked. "There is a price that you pay because when you're kind of almost in the public domain like Bob was . . . you're almost public property, and it's not easy on family. I think he was very cognizant of that, very aware of it and cared very deeply about you."

Devaney was public property from the day he arrived at Nebraska, out of necessity as well as by choice. He traveled across the state, north and south, east and west, recruiting and encouraging people to identify with, and feel a part of, his program. Congressman Jon Christensen paid tribute to Devaney on the floor of the House of Representatives, noting he "not only ushered in a new era of college football but brought Nebraskans together and gave our great state a team and an institution to be proud of."

Devaney also was honored by the state legislature. Though not known for its unanimity, the legislature unanimously adopted a resolution of condolences and thanks to the Devaney family.

Jennings' last team in 1961 went 3-6-1. Devaney's first team went 9-2. Included in that record was a 36-34 Gotham Bowl victory against Miami in New York City in mid-December.

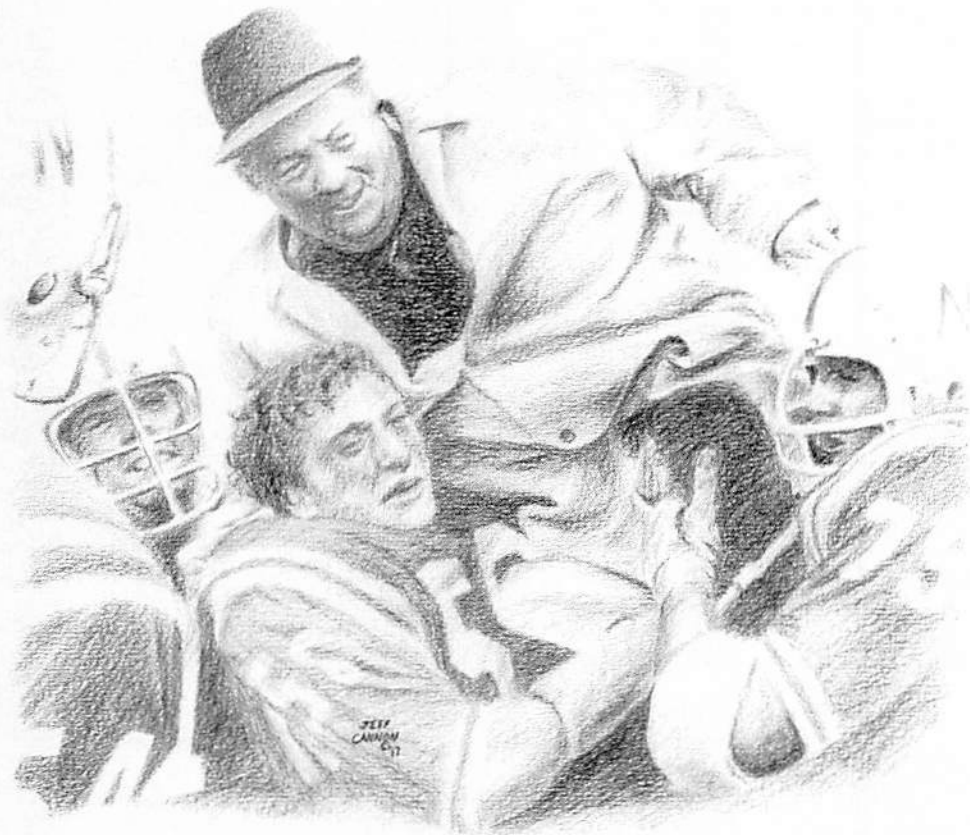
"We will try to build our football team next fall on a two-unit basis and to have a third unit which can spell the first two," Devaney was quoted by sports information director John Bentley in the 1962 media guide. "At the present time, it appears that we will not have the depth that we would like to have which is probably necessary for a highly successful season." He was wrong about that.

Devaney coached only 11 seasons at Nebraska, underscoring how remarkable his accomplishments were. His record was 101-20-2. He coached the Cornhuskers to two national championships. He led them to eight Big Eight championships. And he led them to nine post-season bowl games.

His 1971 team has been rated among the best in history. The 35-31 victory against Oklahoma in

Norman on Thanksgiving Day of 1971 is still described as the "Game of the Century."

Nebraska fashioned a 32-game unbeaten streak from 1969 through the 1972 Orange Bowl game, which would have been Devaney's last as head coach had he followed his original plan. But after the second national championship, which was wrapped up with a 38-6 victory over Bear Bryant and No. 2-ranked Alabama in Miami on New Year's night, Devaney was persuaded to try for three in a row.



By then, he was also athletic director and had picked Osborne as his successor as coach. The selection of Osborne was yet another dramatic example of Devaney's unique ability to lead.

Cornhusker athletics flourished under Devaney the athletic director. That was the case for women's athletics as well as men's. "He gave us the tools and resources, and the winning tradition spilled over from football," Barb Hibner, Nebraska's senior women's administrator, told the *Lincoln Journal Star*.

The athletic department's annual budget was \$1.5 million when Devaney became athletic director in 1967. It is now \$16 million, according to figures reported by the *Lincoln*

Journal Star. The seating capacity of Memorial Stadium nearly doubled during Devaney's 11 seasons as coach.

The continuing NCAA record of 214 consecutive sellouts began in his first season.

Devaney "made Nebraskans proud of their university. He made Nebraskans proud of their state. And probably the most important of all, he made Nebraskans proud of themselves," Chancellor James Moeser said at the university's spring commencement ceremony on

In 11 seasons at Nebraska, Bob Devaney won eight Big Eight titles, two national championships (1970 and 1971) and posted a record of 101-20-2.

the day after Devaney died.

Devaney, who retired as athletic director in 1993, suffered a mild stroke in March of 1995. He continued as athletic director emeritus until July of 1996, when declining health made it difficult for him to make what had been to that point almost daily visits to his office in the South Stadium.

He suffered a heart attack on March 19 of this year, and his recovery was further complicated by a bout with pneumonia. He was

Excerpts From Bob Devaney Memorial Service (May 14, 1997)

OSBORNE'S EULOGY

Well, I'm honored to say a few words on behalf of coaches and people who worked for Bob over so many years, and I'd like to thank Phyllis and Pat . . . Mike, for this opportunity. And I hope I can do this opportunity some justice.

I enjoyed a relationship with Bob for over 36 years, and you know we were very different people, very different personalities. I think one of the unique things about that was that in that 36 years, I can never remember a harsh word, a disagreement, a falling out, any kind of an uproar. It's really kind of unusual, I think, when you think the fact that we're in a highly competitive environment, two kind of intense personalities, and yet to have this kind of a relationship was somewhat unique.

Bob was always supportive, not just of me or the football staff, but he was supportive of everybody that he worked with. And he was kind of a cheerleader-type guy, and he expected a lot, but he gave you the tools to get it done. I think the unique thing in the history of football, people who were coaches and then became athletic directors, the guy who became athletic director couldn't help second-guessing and somehow interjecting himself. Bob never did that, publicly or privately. I think it was an amazing tribute to the kind of person he was.

Al (Dr. Alan Domina) talked a little about loyalty. I think he (Devaney) showed me what loyalty meant. He modeled it. He got it in return, and, I think, the fact that so many coaches and players are here today testifies how important loyalty was. Every member of his football staff is here today, sans one, every living coach and a real high percentage of former players. And not very many people who have been out of coaching that long have commanded that type of respect.

Bob was a high-energy guy. I think that has been alluded to previously. He couldn't have done what he did without tremendous energy and, of course, that carried over into his driving. We'd go to a golf tournament someplace, and everybody would scramble to try and figure out who didn't have to ride home with Bob, you know, because it was very hazardous. But somehow or another, he'd always get there, and nobody got hurt in the process.

He was a stand-up guy. I don't remember Bob ever alibiing for anything. If you got beat, you got beat, and he accepted that, and he took his share of the credit and the blame. He was always very generous to the opponents, and I can remember a few rather painful speeches that he had to make after we played Alabama. But he always gave credit where credit was due, maybe a little more than what was due our opponents.

But I think everybody admired and respected that quality in him. I think the thing he would really appreciate today is how many players and coaches are here today because, I think, over the years the most enjoyable moments that we ever had were when he was talking about former events and past things and different places that he coached and played, and so on. And so I knew a whole lot about Wyoming and Michigan State and Big Beaver and Alpena. Even though I was never there, I knew because he talked about it so much. He obviously loved the players, loved the coaches and really liked to reminisce.

Bob felt things more deeply than most people realized.

The morning of the game, he would build up a pretty good head of emotional steam, and by kickoff time, he was ready to play. And he paid a pretty good price emotionally to get there. Of course, he enjoyed a win, but he felt losses more deeply, I think, than most people realize. It really took its toll, and yet he hid it well. He didn't let on. He paid a price emotionally, and to operate at the level he did, you had to pay a price, and he was willing to do that.

Bob had his faults, and that's part of the human condition; that's the way all of us are. I think the great part about Bob was, he knew that, and he admitted his shortcomings. He had a fairly volatile temper, as any player or coach can tell you. But you know he never stayed angry. So you know he could blow pretty high, and within an hour, he was your friend again . . . and you knew that would happen. He never held a grudge, and he was never vindictive. So I think everybody was appreciative of the fact that you always knew

where you stood with Bob pretty much all of the time, and he had that kind of touch about him.

He had a great sense of humor that has been alluded to previously. I thought he was really good with players, knowing when to be funny and when to be stern. I remember a couple of times when players had enough, were a little tired and probably didn't need to run wind sprints. He would tell them to take a lap around Coach (John) Melton, and at that time, John wasn't quite as streamlined as he is today. So it wasn't quite as far around John as it was the field — but it was close.

He had a great way of responding with humor and kind of deflecting things when things were tough. It has been mentioned that he was a very gregarious guy and could get along with anybody, very quick to give credit to other people, other coaches, players and staff. He was never overly impressed with himself.

You know, he'd kind of bend both ways. He was on the sidelines when we got whipped 47-0. He'd won national championships. And so he understood that it wasn't wise to take yourself too seriously. He always said no matter what you did, the size of your funeral would depend mostly on the weather, and I think that was simply his way of saying that it's no big deal. I'm sure that he's enjoying the fact that there are a lot of people here today, and probably enjoying the fact that there was good weather.

I was really glad to hear Mike say that he (Bob Devaney) said he had accomplished everything that he wanted to get done because there aren't too many people nearing the end of their lives that are able to say that.

The last few weeks, of course, were somewhat difficult. And I think as time went on, as I visited him in the latter days, that maybe the wins and the losses and maybe the buildings and accomplishments were important but not that important. They kind of begin to fade in terms of significance, and, you know, in the end, all we're left with is the issue of love. It has to do with relationships — relationships with your family, your friends, and I feel that God has to be factored in there a little bit because God represents love, to me at least.

We'll certainly miss him, and I want to thank all of you that came to recognize and to celebrate a life well-lived. ■



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released from Lincoln General Hospital on May 1.

On May 9, at 4:05 p.m., Devaney died. Phyllis, his wife of 61 years, and Mike, his son, were at his side, as were long-time friends Jim Ross and Bob Logsdon. Ross coached with him at Alpena High and was on his staffs at Wyoming and Nebraska. Logsdon was the manager of the Legionnaire's club in Lincoln, where Devaney, his assistants and their wives regularly went to relax and celebrate victories.

Logsdon and Ross were pallbearers, as were Glover, Rodgers, Francis Allen, Dr. Dennis Claridge, Chris Peterson and John Sanders. The honorary pallbearers were Walden, Melton, Don Bryant, Cletus Fischer, George Kelly, Monte Kiffin, Warren Powers, Carl Selmer and George Sullivan.

In addition to Phyllis and Mike, who lives in Rye, N.H., Devaney is survived by his daughter Pat Devaney of Palo Alto, Calif., and grandchildren Kindra and Robert Devaney.

Among those at the memorial service were Steve Hatchell, commissioner of the Big 12; Carl James, former Big Eight commissioner; Chuck Neinas, former head of the College Football Association; John Junker, executive director of the Fiesta Bowl; Donnie Duncan, a Big 12 administrator; Frank Kush, a former Arizona State coach; and Bob Frederick, the athletic director at Kansas.

In addition to Osborne, Tagge and Governor Nelson, the Reverend Dr. Otis Young, the Reverend Dr. Robert Chitwood and Dr. Alan Domina spoke during the 65-minute memorial service.

Domina, a Lincoln physician and long-time Devaney friend, recounted how after an unimpressive victory against Oklahoma State in 1965, Devaney had drawn the ire of farm organizations by saying in a post-game interview: "We stunk up the joint. We played like a bunch of farmers."

Devaney salvaged the situation, however, with his quick wit. Twelve days later, the Cornhuskers wrapped up a third consecutive Big Eight championship by defeating Oklahoma 21-9.

"We played like farmers, with great execution and exactitude," Devaney said.

Domina also recalled that he was having a drink with Devaney when another patron came to their table and said although Devaney proba-

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bly didn't remember him, he had been Devaney's milkman. Again, Devaney was quick to respond: "You know, that was some of the best milk we ever had."

Such stories couldn't stop the tears, but they helped.

The service began with scripture, II Timothy 4: 6-8. "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

Near the end of his eulogy, the last, Osborne again fought back emotion.

"The next-to-last time I saw him, he was trying to tell me something, and I couldn't quite understand what it was," Osborne said, haltingly. "I'm not very perceptive sometimes, so after I got home, I figured out that he wanted me to pray with him. I was able to do that that last night I saw him."

"I asked his permission because Bob wasn't the type of guy who would come out and say: 'Let's pray.' So I said: 'Is this OK?' He said: 'Yes, this is OK.' So we had a prayer. I think that part of his life became important, too. That was certainly significant, and was certainly important to me."

The service concluded with a recording of Bing Crosby's singing "When Irish Eyes Are Smiling." As the family and guests left the sanctuary, the First-Plymouth Brass played "Danny Boy."

The courtyard was awash in sunshine. Reporters moved through the crowd. "I told somebody it was a beautiful, absolutely great memorial," Jim Walden told the *Lincoln Journal Star*. "But Bob probably would have left 20 minutes before it got through because he (was) too impatient."

Robert S. Devaney. April 13, 1915 - May 9, 1997. Rest in peace.

"It's an end to an era, so to speak," said Osborne.

"We're going to miss you," Tagge had said on behalf of Devaney's players.

"We love you. You'll always be our coach."

And so, good-bye Coach...

"I miss him," said Osborne.

We all do. ■

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A Time To Reflect

Although the unique passion for Cornhusker football preceded him, Bob Devaney introduced the modern era by restoring a winning tradition that had been suspended for the better part of 20 years

THE RED BRICK house sits on C Street, near Our Saviour's Lutheran Church and the intersection of S. 40th. The neighborhood is one of mature trees and well-tended lawns.

The May morning is peaceful. The sky is blue, accented by wisps of clouds. A small sign in the window of a neighbor's house says: "NU #1."

Three days have passed since Bob Devaney was laid to rest . . .

Devaney lived in the red brick house on C Street until the last couple of years before his death. After his health began to fail him, he and wife Phyllis moved to Eastmont Towers.

In the early 1960s, the C Street neighborhood was closer to the south and east edges of Lincoln than it is now. The city limits have pushed farther out in both directions over 35 years.

In some ways, the red brick house symbolizes Devaney's remarkable accomplishments during 11 seasons as Nebraska's football coach — his accomplishments as athletic director and goodwill ambassador for the state were no less remarkable, but we appreciate the latter because of the former.

Tippy Dye was the athletic director who hired Devaney away from Wyoming, a fact lost on many in a new generation of Cornhusker fans, even though had it not been for Dye, events wouldn't have transpired the way they did. Devaney was the right coach, in the right place, at the right time.

Dye made the decision that profoundly changed the course of Nebraska football history. However, buildings aren't named in honor of athletic directors. That Devaney was athletic director when the Sports Center was named for him was coincidence not cause. But I digress . . .

As with the red brick house on the quiet street in what is becoming a near-south neighborhood, Devaney's coaching accomplishments have been hidden by the passing of time.

Unless you are of that particular generation of Nebraska fans, you have to go looking to find the specifics of Devaney's 11 seasons. You have to turn east off S. 40th Street.

They are overgrown, like the rings inside a giant redwood. They are there, beneath the bark of national championships in 1994 and 1995 and the 24 consecutive seasons of nine or more victories and bowl-game appearances since he stepped aside as coach. But the bark must be stripped.

Devaney used to joke that he had been at Nebraska for several years before he discovered the Cornhuskers had lost the 1941 Rose Bowl game. Not only was it

Nebraska's first bowl appearance but it also was the football program's most significant, and recent, achievement before he arrived in 1962.

Devaney's death, on May 9, marks the end of an era. He was of another time, when Bear Bryant, Duffy Daugherty, Ara Parseghian and Bud Wilkinson walked college football's sidelines.

Tom Osborne often talks of the importance of the journey rather than the destination. Devaney led the Cornhuskers on their journey to national prominence. In many ways, Osborne has had to deal with the destination throughout his quarter of a century as Devaney's hand-picked successor.

Those of us who have lived in Devaney's time mourn his death not only because it has taken away a friend but also because it reminds us we cannot relive years that seem so much happier and simpler than they were.

I hope his close friends and family don't take offense at my using the term "friend" to describe my association with Devaney. I knew him better than some, because of my responsibilities as a sports writer as well as my collaboration with him and others on his 1981 autobiography *Devaney*.

The book was written "By Bob Devaney and Friends." I was a friend by definition, if not in fact. I also called him "Coach" another liberty, considering I never played for him. But I was not alone in either case. He had countless

friends whom he never met. And he was "Coach" to the entire state.

A writer (for *Sports Illustrated*, I think) once described Devaney as having the appearance of a "dumpy baker." The characterization fit, though probably not in the way the writer intended.

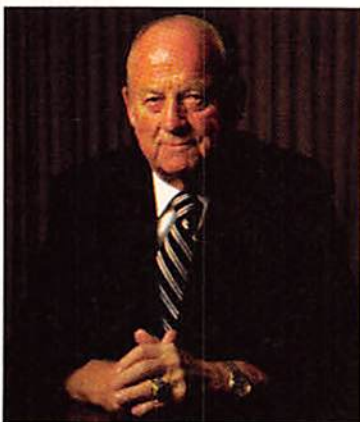
Devaney was as unpretentious as he was extraordinary. And he wasn't averse to rolling up his sleeves and getting flour all over himself if that's what was needed to get the job done.

In a sense, Devaney came to Nebraska anonymously. He used an assumed name when he visited Lincoln to be interviewed. But over 11 years, he wrote his name across the state in bold red letters. The figurative ink is indelible, as if anyone would have wanted to erase it.

He was just like us, and yet he was not like us at all. He lived all those years in that quiet neighborhood near C and S. 40th streets. You could walk up to his front door and knock. You could shake the Coach's hand. He never had an unlisted telephone number.

The house is still there, a fleeting reminder of what used to be.

Now he resides in our memory, however . . . and our hearts. ■ — Mike Babcock



what if?

what if?

what if something unexpected happens?

what if my face really does stay this way?



what if I need a new doctor?

what if I get transferred?



what if?



what if?



what if?

what if I block the plate?



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what if I get sick when I'm away on business?



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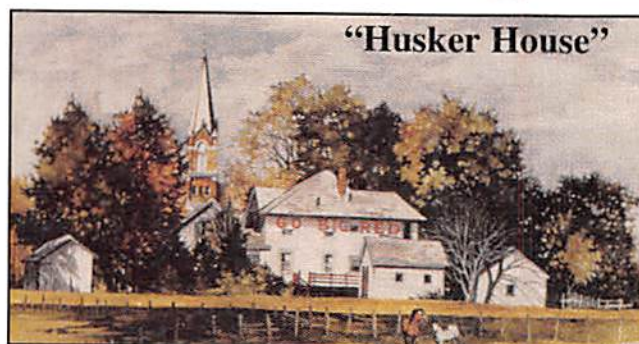
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